

# **The commentary on this sixteenth chapter from Zhìyǐ's 'Words & Passages of The Lotus Sūtra'**

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## **Part #3 - An explanation of the chapter's text**

### *Section A - The prose on the main teaching*

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In this chapter's teaching about 'opening up that which is immediate (here & now) and revealing that which is distant (timeless & eternal), the words are in two parts.

1. First there is an admonition to have faith.
2. Then there is the main answer (to the questions posed in the fifteenth chapter).

1. **The admonition from the Buddha to have faith.** This is in three parts:

- a. Three admonitions to have faith
- b. Three requests for the teaching with an assurance of faithful acceptance of its words
- c. An additional request and an additional admonition

The Buddha admonished those in the audience to accept his discourse with faith. In the words of this chapter, there were three admonitions and three requests, and then an extra request and an extra admonition.

\* When introducing the teaching of the gateway to the manifestation of enlightenment (J. shakumon, 迹門) in chapter two, there were three requests and one admonition.

\* In this chapter there are four requests and four admonitions.

\* From beginning to end in this sūtra there are therefore seven requests for an explanation of the teachings and five admonitions to have faith in them.

That which is especially important must be most earnestly and deeply respected.

a. The three admonitions to have faith

爾	時	佛	告	諸	菩	薩	及	一	切	大	眾 :
ni	ji	butsu	gō	sho	bo	satsu	gyū	is -	sai	dai	shu
At this	time	Buddha	addressed	all	(Bodhisattvas)	with	(all)			great	assembly

「諸	善	男	子!	汝	等	當	信	解			
sho	zen	nan	shi	nyo	to	to	shin	ge			
All	good	(sons)		you	of	proper	faith	understanding			

如	來	誠	諦	之	語。」	復	告	大	眾 :		
nyo	rai	jō	tai	shi	go	bu	gō	dai	shu		
thus	come	genuine	truth	's	words.	Again	address	great	multitude		

「汝	等	當	信	解	如	來	誠	諦	之	語。」	
nyo	tō	tō	shin	ge	nyo	rai	jō	tai	shi	go	
You	of	proper	faith	understanding	thus	come	genuine	truth	's	words.	

又	復	告	諸	大	眾:	「汝	等	當	信	解	
u	bu	gō	sho	dai	shu	nyo	tō	tō	shin	ge	
And	again	address	all	great	multitude:	You	of	proper	faith	understanding	

如	來	誠	諦	之	語。」						
nyo	rai	jō	tai	shi	go.						
thus	come	genuine	truth	's	words.						

At this time the Buddha addressed the bodhisattvas as well as all of the others in the great assembly.

“Good sons, for you with proper faith and understanding there are the genuine and true words of The One Who Has Descended Into This World.”

Again the Buddha addressed the great assembly:

“For you with proper faith and understanding there are the genuine and true words of The One Who Has Descended Into This World.”

Once again, the Buddha addressed all of the great assembly:

“For you with proper faith and understanding there are the genuine and true words of The One Who Has Descended Into This World.”

In explaining these words:

- \* **Genuine (jō, 誠)** refers to these words being faithful guidance (needing to be understood subjectively, that is, through the prism of their own lives).
- \* **True (tai, 諦)** refers to these words having been critically judged as truth (in terms of objective reality) and so not being misleading.
- \* **Words (gō, 語)** here refers to testimony that is based on a witnessing of the truth.

In the past there were the seven kinds of skillful ways & means,<sup>21</sup> teachings that were (only) based on the ideas and words of others. They did not address the very highest and most transcendental reality. Now, in following one’s own ideas and words, the essence is revealed. Because of this, the sūtra now speaks about that which is (both) **genuine and true (jōtai, 誠諦)**.

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b. The three requests for the teaching from the bodhisattvas, led by Maitreya<sup>7</sup>

是	時	菩	薩	大	眾,	彌	勒	為	首,
ze	ji	bo	satsu	dai	shu	mi	roku	i	shu
this	time	(bodhisattvas)	great	multitude	(Maitreya)	as	head		

合	掌	白	佛	言:	「世	尊!	唯	願	說	之,
gas-	shō	byaku	butsu	gon	se	son	yui	gan	sets-	shi
join	palms	address	Buddha	saying	world	honored	only	pray	teach	of this

我	等	當	信	受	佛	語。」	如	是	三	白	已,
ga	tō	tō	shin	ju	butsu	go.	nyo	ze	san	byaku	i
We	of	proper	faith	accept	Buddha’s	words’	like	this	three	said	already

Then those in great assembly of Bodhisattvas, led by Maitreya, joined their palms together and spoke to the Buddha, saying:

“Blessed One, we only pray that you teach us - those of us with proper faith will accept the Buddha’s words.”

Having spoken like this three times ...

The Bodhisattvas will follow this genuine guidance without any fleeting occurrences of doubt. Upon hearing the Buddha’s words, they will surely embrace them with faith.

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c. An extra request and an extra admonition

復 言：「唯 願 說 之， 我 等 當 信 受 佛 語。」  
bu gon yui gan sets- shi ga tō tō shin ju butsu go  
Again saying 'only pray teach of this. We of proper faith accept Buddha's words'

爾 時 世 尊 知 諸 菩 薩 三 請 不 止，  
ni ji se son chi sho bo satsu san shō fu shi  
At this time world honored recognized all (bodhisattvas) three requests not stopping

而 告 之 言：「汝 等 諦 聽，  
ni gō shi gon: nyo tō tai chō  
then address them saying 'You should investigate listen ...

...again they said

"We only pray that you teach us - those of us with proper faith will accept the Buddha's words."

The Blessed One then spoke these words, recognizing that the Bodhisattvas would not stop after making three requests:

"You should carefully listen to this teaching about ..."

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2. The main answer to the questions posed in chapter fifteen:

The main answer as explained in this chapter is in two parts:

- a. A prose portion (beginning here)
  - b. A verse portion (beginning on page 100)
- a. **The prose portion** also has two parts.
1. The main teaching (beginning here)
  2. An illustration of this teaching (beginning on page 82)
1. The main teaching is also in two parts:
- a. The benefits bestowed by the Buddha over time (beginning here)
  - b. A general conclusion on these benefits being without falsehood (beginning on page 80)

In the teaching on that which was immediate (here & now), one only sees the manifestation, the eighty-year lifespan of the Buddha Śākyamuni in this world. One does not recognize all of the past lifetimes that have been without count or the future lifetimes and will never end. And so, in terms of the past, present and future, the sūtra first opens up that which is immediate (here & now) and then reveals the distant source (that is timeless & eternal). With this being so, the benefits bestowed are not just those that have descended from the Buddha Śākyamuni. They also include those from all the Buddhas from time immemorial. Because of this, there is a general conclusion that this teaching is without any falsehood.

In this prose section on the main teaching about the purpose for this spiritual life, there are few words on the benefits to be bestowed in the future. However, there are more in the illustration of this teaching, both in prose and the verse that follows reiterating it.

- a. The words in this main section of prose on the benefits bestowed over time are in two parts:
1. The benefits that have been bestowed in the past
  2. The benefits being bestowed in the present
- The benefits to be bestowed in the future are implied but are not explicitly mentioned here.

1. The section on the benefits that have been bestowed in the past is divided into two parts:
- a. From the words here speaking about **the secret mystery of The One Who Has Descended Into This World (nyorai himitsu, 如來祕密 ...)**, there is a part on feelings of attachment to the immediate reality.
  - b. From the words later in this chapter that say **However, good sons, (nen zen nanshi, 然善男子 ...)**, there is a part on breaking through that which is immediate (here & now) and revealing that which is distant (timeless & eternal).

- a. In the first part on attachments to the immediate teaching, there are three parts:
    1. The Buddha's true purpose about which there is confusion; This is described here as the pervading power of grace.<sup>11</sup>
    2. Those who can be confused about this; the assembly of the proud, the human and the divine beings in meditation
    3. The reason for confused feelings about the distant (timeless & eternal) reality; Believing that the Buddha left the palace of the Śākya clan and (relatively recently) attained enlightenment, not far from the town of Bodhgayā
1. The Buddha's true purpose about which there is confusion; On the pervading power of the grace descending from the Buddha's spiritual life:<sup>11</sup>

如 來 祕 密 神 通 之 力  
 nyo rai hi mitsu jin zū shi riki  
 thus come secret mystery spiritual penetration 's power.

**“... the secret mystery of The One Who Has Descended Into This World and the pervading power of its grace.”**

**The secret mystery (himitsu, 祕密)** of the Buddha's spiritual life (S. dharma kāya, 法身)

- \* The one spiritual life of the Buddha is three-fold - this is called the **secret (hi, 祕)**.
- \* The three aspects of this life are one - this is called the **mystery (mitsu, 密)**.
- \* Since long ago this has not been taught, and so it is called a secret.
- \* Only the Buddhas have understood this, and so it is called a mystery.

**The pervading power of its grace (jinzū shi riki, 神通之力):**<sup>11</sup> This is the use or 'application' of this three-fold spiritual life of enlightenment.<sup>4</sup>

1. Spiritually (S. ādhi-, C. shén, J. jin, 神) refers to the unchanging (dialectical) principle declared from heaven that is found in the existential nature (of the transcendental vow) and descends from this spiritual life (S. dharma kāya, 法性身).
2. Pervading (S. -ṣṭhāna, C. tōng, J. zū, 通) refers to the transcendental knowledge that is inconceivable and overcomes all obstacles and limitations. This is the reward of grace that descends from the (Buddha's) spiritual life (S. saṃbhoga kāya, 報身 or 受用身).
3. Power (S. balā, C. lì, J. riki, 力) is a reference to to the mastery of its skillful use through the response of a manifestation descending from this life (S. nirmāṇa kāya, 應身 or 化身).

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2. Those who can be confused (sentient beings)

一 切 世 間 天、 人 及 阿 修 羅，  
is- sai se ken ten nin gyū a shu ra,  
(All of the) (worlds) gods people and (asuras),

**“Those in the heavens (of meditation - S. deva, J. ten 天), those in the human realm (involved in social interaction - S. manuṣya, J. nin, 人) and those driven by pride (attached to ego & possession, S. asura, J. ashura, 阿修羅) ...”**

3. The reason for confusion about this teaching (through attachments to the here & now);  
This is about the reason for confused feelings about the distant (timeless & eternal) reality.

皆 謂：【今 釋 迦 牟 尼 佛， 出 釋 氏 宮， 去 伽 耶 城  
kai i kon sha ka mu ni butsu, shuts- shaku shi gū ko ga ya jō  
all reason now (Śākyamuni) Buddha, left Śākya clan palace went to (Gayā) city

不 遠， 坐 於 道 場， 得 阿 耨 多 羅 三 藐 三 菩 提。】  
fu on za o dō jō, toku a noku ta ra san myaku san bo dai.  
not far sat at path site, attained (anuttara) (samyak) (sambodhi).

**“... all now reason that the Buddha Śākyamuni only recently left the palace of the Śākya clan, went to Gayā and, not far, sat where he cultivated the noble path and attained the supreme universal enlightenment (S. anuttara samyak sambodhi, 阿耨多羅三藐三菩提).”**

All of the Buddhas of the past, present & future are endowed with this three-fold spiritual life of enlightenment.<sup>4</sup> This secret was not transmitted in any of the earlier doctrines.<sup>42</sup> As a result, all of those in the heavens, in human society and among the prideful have reasoned that the Buddha only now first realized this three-fold nature of enlightenment while seated under the tree of spiritual awakening (S. bodhi vṛkṣa, 菩提樹).<sup>19</sup> Because of this, they have retained attachments to the old teaching (about the immediate reality here & now) and have doubts about this new teaching on that which is distant (timeless & eternal). In this new teaching, which is the gateway to penetrating the source of enlightenment (J. honmon, 本門), the Buddha no longer addressed those on the two vehicles (only focused on attaining their own freedom from affliction). Now, only the bodhisattvas were addressed. These bodhisattvas included those in the realms of heaven, humanity and the prideful. Inside these three paths are all basically endowed with virtue. The three evil destinies, those saddled with the consequences arising from heavy moral transgressions, those with dull spiritual capacities, and those only having knowledge of life's lesser purposes, did not understand this greater teaching and could only make the immediate reasoning (about the attainment of enlightenment here & now, in this world). And so the Longer Version of The Sūtra About the Deliverance of Transcendental Discernment (Mahā Prajñā Pāramitā Sūtra, 摩訶般若波羅蜜經) says:

“The greater vehicle (Mahāyāna, 摩訶衍) teaching brings out the best of those in the spheres of heaven, humanity and the prideful but it does not address those found on the three roads of evil.”

There are said to be three kinds of bodhisattvas ('awakened sentient beings'):

1. Those who come from below (rising up from the earth, beyond space and time)<sup>34</sup>
  2. Those from other directions (in space)
  3. Those from the past (in time)
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1. Those who arise from below are the ones who were influenced and spiritually transformed at the original time and so do not reason with attachments to the immediate teaching.
  2. & 3. Those from other directions and those from the past are both of two kinds:
    - a. There are those who have arisen through a manifestation of the Buddha's spiritual life, having already (in the past) realized the (transcendental) nature of life's purpose that neither arises nor perishes. Some of them realized this through hearing the teaching about 'discarding the manifestations and revealing the source'. For those who had not before heard about this, there was the reward of grace<sup>12</sup> that came from accepting the Buddha's spiritual life (through faith). Upon becoming grounded in its transcendental nature, they were able to grasp the teaching about that which is timeless and eternal. In response, these bodhisattvas did not bear attachments to the immediate reasoning (about the Buddha first attaining enlightenment within the limits of space and time).
    - b. Those who have only now for the first time attained an enduring meditation on the nature of life's purpose that neither arises nor perishes and transcends their lives in this world (S. anutpattika dharma kṣānti, 無生法忍)<sup>59</sup> and those that have not yet done so; these bodhisattvas still have this 'immediate' reasoning.

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- b. From **In fact good sons, I have already attained enlightenment and descended into this world (nen zen nanshi! ga jitsu jōbutsu irai, 然善男子我實成佛已來 ...)** there is a part on breaking through that which is immediate (here & now) and revealing that which is distant (timeless & eternal): This is about breaking through this confusion by revealing the source of the spiritual life that is timeless & eternal. The previous admonition about 'the genuine truth' (jōtai, 誠諦) was specifically a reference to this. This is further divided into two parts:
    1. Revealing that it is timeless & eternal (very distant)
    2. From the words **Since I have descended into this world (ji ju zerai, 自從是來 ...)**, there is an explanation of the opportunities for this spiritual life to bestow benefits in the past.
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1. The revelation that it is timeless & eternal is also in two parts:
    - a. The explanation that the source of this spiritual life is very distant
    - b. Making an illustration to try to measure this distance
  - a. The explanation that the source of this spiritual life is very distant (timeless & eternal):

然,	善	男 子!	我	實	成	佛	已	來
nen	zen	nan shi	ga	jitsu	jō	butsu	i	rai
Actually good	(sons)!	I	really	attained	enlightenment	already	came	

無	量	無	邊	百	千	萬	億	那	由	他	劫。
mu	ryō	mu	hen	hyaku	zen	man	oku	na	yu	ta	kō.
without limit	without bounds	100	1000	10000	100000	(nayuta)	kalpas				



**“In fact good sons, I have already attained enlightenment and descended into this world for countless hundreds, thousands, millions and billions of ages.”**

Having already attained enlightenment and descended into this world for all of eternity, the immediate reasoning about the attainment of enlightenment at Gayā is transcended. In breaking through this immediate reasoning, the teaching about that which is distant (timeless & eternal) is revealed. This idea is outlined in The Profound Meaning of The Lotus Sūtra.<sup>28</sup> The main function of these words is to break through that which is immediate (here & now) and reveal that which is distant (timeless & eternal). It is also called ‘breaking through immediate reasoning and feelings’. In discarding that which is immediate and revealing that which is distant, there is the discarding of all the doctrines about the immediate (existential) reality (of that which is here & now).

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b. Making an illustration to measure it; This is broken down into three parts.

1. Making an illustration and then asking a question
2. The answer
3. Revealing that which is distant (timeless & eternal)

1. Making an illustration and then asking a question

譬	如	五	百	千	萬	億	那	由	他	阿	僧	祇
hi	nyo	go	hyaku	zen	man	oku	na	yu	ta	a	sō	gi
Compare like		5	100	1000	10000	100000		(nayuta)			(asamkhyeya)	

三	千	大	千	世	界,	假	使	有	人	末	為	微	塵,
san	zen	dai	zen	se	kai	ke	shi	u	nin	mats-	i	mi	jin
(3000)		great	1000	world	realms,	suppose	cause	have	person	grind	as	minute	dust

過	於	東	方	五	百	千	萬	億	那	由	他	阿	僧	祇	國
ka	o	tō	bō	go	hyaku	zen	man	oku	na	yu	ta	a	sō	gi	koku
go	to	east	direction	5	100	1000	10000	100000		(nayuta)		(asamkhyeya)		nations	

乃	下	一	塵,	如	是	東	行,	盡	是	微	塵。
nai	ge	ichi	jin,	nyo	ze	tō	gyō,	jin	ze	mi	jin.
then	drop	single	particle,	like	this	east	travel	use up	these	minute	particles

諸	善	男	子!	於	意	云	何?	是	諸	世	界,
sho	zen	nan	shi!	o	i	un	ga?	ze	sho	se	kai,
All	good	(sons)!		In	mind	say	what?	these	many	world	realms

可	得	思	惟	校	計	知	其	數	不?	」
ka	toku	shi	yui	kyō	kei	chi	go	shu	fu	
possible	grasp	imagine	consider	calculate	figure	know	their	number	(or)	not?



“Suppose that there were five hundred, a thousand, a million, a billion, a countless number of three billion-fold realms. Suppose then that a person ground all of these realms up into particles of dust and then traveled eastward through five hundred, a thousand, a million, a billion, a countless number of nations and then dropped a single particle of dust. Then further suppose that this person continued eastward until all of these particles of dust were used up. Good sons, what do you think? Would it be possible to know, estimate or even imagine this number of realms or not?”

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2. From Maitreya and the other bodhisattvas then spoke to the Buddha together, saying (miroku bosat-tō gu byaku butsu gon, 彌勒菩薩等俱白佛言 ...), there is the answer. This answer indicates that there were three kinds of people who did not understand.

彌 勒 菩 薩 等 俱 白 佛 言 「世 尊!  
mi roku bo sat- tō gu byaku butsu gon se son  
(Maitreya) (Bodhisattva) etal together told Buddha said: World honored

是 諸 世 界, 無 量 無 邊, 非 算 數 所 知,  
ze sho se kai, mu ryō mu hen, hi san ju sho chi,  
these many world realms without limit without bounds not calculate number here know

亦 非 心 力 所 及; 一 切 聲 聞、 辟 支 佛,  
yaku hi shin riki sho gyū is- sai shō mon hyaku shi butsu  
Also (not of) mind's power here and (all of the) voice hearers (pratyeka buddhas)

以 無 漏 智, 不 能 思 惟 知 其 限 數;  
i mu ro chi, fu nō shi yui chi go gen shu;  
with non afflicted knowledge, not able imagine conceive know this limit number

我 等 住 阿 惟 越 致 地, 於 是 事 中 亦 所 不 達。  
ga tō jū a yui otch- chi ji o ze ji chū yaku sho fu datsu.  
we who abide in (avaivartika) stage, in this matter midst also here not reach.

世 尊! 如 是 諸 世 界, 無 量 無 邊。」  
se son nyo ze sho se kai mu ryō mu hen  
World honored! Like this many world realms without limit without bounds.

Maitreya and the other bodhisattvas then spoke to the Buddha together, saying:

“Blessed One, all these worlds are without measure and without bounds. Their number is incalculable and beyond the power of the mind. Even with their knowledge that is beyond any affliction, all of the students of life's purpose and beings awakened to the nature of sentient existence in their own lives are incapable of knowing or conceiving of such a number. Even bodhisattvas who are at the stage of never turning back are unable to grasp this. Blessed One - all of these worlds are without measure and without bounds.”

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3. The conclusion of the illustration, revealing that which is distant (timeless & eternal):

爾 時 佛 告 大 菩 薩 眾：「諸 善 男 子！  
ni ji butsu gō dai bo sats- shu sho zen nan shi!  
At this time Buddha addressed great (bodhisattva) multitude: all good (sons)!

今 當 分 明 宣 語 汝 等。是 諸 世 界，  
kon tō fun myō sen go nyo tō. se sho se kai  
Now must part clarify speaking message (to) you (who). this many world realms

若 著 微 塵 及 不 著 者 盡 以 為 塵，  
nyaku jaku mi jin gyū fu jaku sha jin i i jin  
whether hold minute particle or not hold one use up by as particles,

一 塵 一 劫，我 成 佛 已 來，  
ichi jin ik- kō ga jō butsu i rai,  
each particle one kalpa, I attained enlightenment already come,

復 過 於 此 百 千 萬 億 那 由 他 阿 僧 祇 劫。  
bu ka o shi hyaku sen man oku na yu ta a sō gi kō.  
again more than this 100 1000 10000 100000 (nayuta) (asamkhyeya) kalpas.

The Buddha then addressed the great multitude of bodhisattvas:

“Good sons, now there is a part that I must clarify in telling you this. All of these worlds - whether they hold a particle of dust or not - grind all of them into particles of dust, and then imagine each particle of dust being the age of a universe. I have already attained enlightenment and descended into this world for longer than this by hundreds, thousands, millions, billions and countless numbers of such ages.”

Other sūtras describe numbers that are impossible to express, using particles of dust and grains of sand as illustrations.<sup>9</sup> The idea here is to make the highest number possible. Even the number of realms over which particles of dust were dropped would be impossible to cover, much less those over which one was not dropped - how could one express this number? To combine those where one was dropped and those where one was not dropped would be even more impossible to express. Whether or not a particle of dust was dropped, are even the lands covered by a single particle of dust possible to express, much less any more than this?

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2. From **Since I have descended into this world ... (ji ju zerai, 自從是來 ...):**

This part explains the opportunities in the past for this spiritual life to bestow benefits upon sentient beings. This is also in three parts:

- a. The place where there have been benefits
- b. The clearing away of doubt about the manifestations (of this spiritual life)
- c. From **When sentient beings come and reach me here ... (nyaku u shujō raishi ga sho ... 若有眾生來至我所 ...)**, there is an explanation of how there have been the opportunities for this spiritual life to bestow benefits in the past.

a. The place where there have been benefits

自 從 是 來, 我 常 在 此 娑 婆 世 界  
ji jū ze rai, ga jō zai shi sha ba se kai  
Since from this come, I always here this (saha) world realm

說 法 教 化, 亦 於 餘 處 百 千 萬 億  
sep- pō kyō ke yaku o yo sho hyaku zen man oku  
teach purpose instruct influence also in other places 100 1000 10000 100000

那 由 他 阿 僧 祇 國 導 利 眾 生。  
na yu ta a sō gi koku dō ri shu jō  
(nayuta) (asamkhyeya) nations guide benefit many beings

“Since I have descended into this world, I have always been teaching and spiritually transforming sentient beings in this world that all must endure together as well as in other places in hundreds, thousands, millions, billions and countless nations, guiding and benefiting them.”

It is necessary to reveal the place. The illustration cited before described a very long period of time. Where is it that the Buddha has lived so long? The sūtra says here that the Buddha has always been in this world we must all endure together (S. sahā loka, J. shaba sekai, 娑婆世界)<sup>9</sup> as well as in other nations, everywhere doing the work of the Buddha.

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b. From **Good sons, in the meantime ... (shozen nanshi, o ze chūgen, 諸善男子! 於是中間 ...)**,  
There is clearing away doubts from attachments to the manifestations of this spiritual life:

「諸 善 男 子! 於 是 中 間, 我 說 燃 燈 佛 等,  
sho zen nan shi! o ze chū gen, ga setsu nen dō but- tō  
All good (sons)! During this in between, I told of Shining Beacon Buddha etal

又 復 言 其 入 於 涅 槃, 如 是 皆 以 方 便 分 別。  
u bu gon go nyū o ne han, nyo ze kai i hō ben fun betsu.  
And again said they entered into (nirvāṇa), like this all by ways means (distinguishing)

“Good sons, in the meantime I have taught about the Buddha named ‘Steadily Shining Beacon’ and others, and then said that they entered into nirvāṇa. All of this was said by distinguishing different ways & means of teaching about my life.”

In clearing away doubts that arise from attachments to the manifestations of this spiritual life, the doubts are about its cause and effect. The doctrines of the past taught about the practice of various different kinds of causes and the resultant attainment of various different prophecies of enlightenment (S. vyākaraṇa, 得記),<sup>36</sup> which were doubtful effects of these causes.

\* In saying **I have taught about the Buddha named ‘Steadily Shining Beacon’ and others (ga setsu nendobut- tō, 我說燃燈佛等)**, there was the doubtful cause (of enlightenment) to be discarded.

- \* In then saying **and then said that they entered into nirvāṇa (ubu gon go nyū o nehan,** 又復言其入於涅槃), there was the doubtful effect (of enlightenment) to be discarded. The cause & effect of the spiritual life is not just a simple linear sequence of events like this.
- \* In saying **All of this was said by distinguishing different ways & means (of teaching about my life) (nyoze kai i hōben funbetsu,** 如是皆以方便分別), they were not teachings about their transcendental purpose, and so now the sūtra speaks about clearing away doubts about them.

Some have spoken of the Buddha using the ways & means of speaking about a Buddha named ‘Steadily Shining Beacon’ (S. Dīpaṃkara, J. Nendo Butsu, 然燈佛)<sup>8</sup> as his teacher. Actually the truth is that Śākyamuni made this name up.

- \* Although the spiritual life of the Buddhas is not born, Śākyamuni presented its birth.
- \* Although this life does not perish, he presented its extinction (passing from this world). Because of this, the Buddha **then said that they entered into nirvāṇa (ubu gongo nyū o nehan,** 入於涅槃). Although knowing that this was not really so, the Buddha maintained this story. Why was this? It was because the time was ripe for the Buddha Śākyamuni to use the image of a past Buddha named ‘Steadily Shining Beacon’ to spiritually influence and transform sentient beings, but the time was not yet ripe for him to use himself as an example to do so.

Bodhisattvas only attain their prophecy of enlightenment from a Buddha. Attaining prophecies of enlightenment (S. vyākaraṇa, 得記)<sup>36</sup> are the effects while the various bodhisattva practices are the causes of them. Once bodhisattvas get beyond the literal words, they may grasp their real significance. But, **in the meantime (o ze chugen,** 於是中間),<sup>37</sup> there was the employment of narratives about this Buddha named ‘Steadily Shining Beacon’ and others to spiritually influence and transform sentient beings. Even though there may not have really been a Buddha named ‘Steadily Shining Lamp’, there were benefits in speaking about such a Buddha in the meantime. These included benefits in terms of both visual forms and voiced sounds.<sup>43</sup>

- \* When Śākyamuni spoke of meeting the Buddha named ‘Steadily Shining Beacon’ in this world, there were benefits in terms of using the Buddha’s visual form.
- \* Upon speaking about this Buddha ‘Steadily Shining Beacon’ perishing from this world and entering into extinction to explain the continued influence of this Buddha, there were said to be the use of voiced benefits (from the sūtra after this Buddha’s life in this world).
- \* With there being both visual and voiced benefits like this, there are all of the causes that have been said to exist in **the meantime (chūgen,** 中間).<sup>37</sup>
- \* Having already produced these visual and voiced benefits, that which was said to have been born certainly then had to die. Dying is entering into the spiritual freedom of nirvāṇa, and is said to be the inevitable effect (of being born in this world).

Question: The Buddha had not yet spoken about (anyone else) having attained this fruit of enlightenment in the meantime.<sup>37</sup> Why is this so?

Answer: Before the teaching of The Lotus Sūtra, how could there have been doubts about attaining the fruit from realizing this spiritual life of enlightenment (that is timeless & eternal)? The Buddha Śākyamuni had made up the idea of the Buddha ‘Steadily Shining Beacon’ living long ago in the distant past and they did not really understand this either. The teachings prior to The Lotus Sūtra had not yet discussed having already attained enlightenment (in the eternal past). In what earlier teaching was it explained that the Buddha Śākyamuni had made up the Buddha named ‘Steadily Shining Beacon’ and then cleared away doubts about it?

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- c. From **Good sons, when sentient beings have come and reached me here ... (shozen nan-shi! nyaku u shujō raishi gasho, 諸善男子! 若有眾生來至我所 ...)**, there is an explanation of how there have been the opportunities for this spiritual life to bestow benefits in the past.

This is also in two parts:

1. The Buddha's sympathy for the receptivity (potential capacities) of sentient beings and the Buddha's responses with manifestations of the spiritual life<sup>39</sup>
2. How this spiritual life bestows the benefits of spiritual transformation on them

1. Receptivity, sympathy and response

「諸 善 男 子! 若 有 眾 生 來 至 我 所,  
sho zen nan shi! nyaku u shu jō rai shi ga sho,  
All good (sons)! When have multitude beings come reach me here,

我 以 佛 眼, 觀 其 信 等 諸 根 利 鈍,  
ga i butsu gen, kan go shin tō sho gon ri don,  
I with Buddha eye, observe their faith etc many roots sharp dull,

隨 所 應 度,  
zui sho ō do,  
adapt here respond deliver,

**“Good sons, when sentient beings have come and reached me here, with my enlightened eye I have observed their faith and other spiritual capacities, and whether they are sharp or dull. Adapting to these conditions I have responded to deliver them.”**

- \* **When sentient beings have come and reached me here (nyaku u shujō raishi gasho, 若有眾生來至我所):** This is a reference to the receptivity (S. āśaya, 機)<sup>39</sup> (potential capacity) of sentient beings in the past for both the sudden and gradual kinds of influence that have guided them towards the spiritual life (S. dharma kāya, 法身).
- \* **With my enlightened eye I have observed (ga i butsugen, kan, 我以佛眼, 觀):** Having already attained enlightenment long ago, the Buddha used his enlightened eye that illuminated all like a mirror, not showing any partiality in how it bequeathed its mercy and compassion. As soon as the aspirations of sentient beings arose, the Buddha benefited them with greater and lesser responses (in accordance with their capacities). There are two powers used to skillfully respond to the spiritual capacities of sentient beings:
  1. In response to those receptive to the (lesser or ephemeral benefits found in the) spheres of heaven and social human personality, there is the reward of blossoms (S. puṣpa vipāka, 花報 or 華報).<sup>41</sup>
  2. In response to those who are receptive to the (greater, enduring benefits found on the) noble path to enlightenment, there is the reward of fruits (S. phala vipāka, 果報).<sup>41</sup>

2. Through use of the eye of enlightenment (S. buddha cakṣus, 佛眼), the Buddha perfectly illuminates the many different aspects of virtuous conditions, recognizing them from their beginning (as seeds) to their end (as ultimate purposes or destinies). This sūtra explains that the enlightened eye observes and recognizes all of the myriad different aspects found in the virtuous spiritual conditions of sentient beings and how they are all ultimately guided towards enlightenment. This is the basic idea described in chapter two of this sūtra as “the one great work through which there are the causes & conditions for those blessed with enlightenment to appear in this world”.

- \* **Their faith and other spiritual capacities (shin tō shogon, 信等諸根):** This is a reference to faith and the other four of the five virtuous spiritual capacities (S. pañca indriyāṇi, 五根) that lead to enlightenment.
  - a. One is the revealing cause of enlightenment (S. jñāpaka hetu, 了因佛性):<sup>40</sup>
    - #1 Transcendental discernment of life’s purpose (S. prajñā, 慧)
  - b. The other four are the conditional causes that produce and sustain it (S. pratyaya hetu, 緣因佛性):<sup>40</sup>
    - #2 Faith (S. śraddhā, 信)
    - #3 Diligence of effort (S. vīrya, 精進)
    - #4 Continuous remembrance (S. smṛti, 念)
    - #5 Mental resolve (S. samādhi, 定)

The conditions for awakening these two kinds of spiritual capacities can be either sudden or gradual. In generally speaking about sympathy for the conditions of receptivity<sup>39</sup> found in sentient beings with sharp and dull spiritual capacities:

- \* Through the perfect doctrine & the distinguished doctrine specifically for bodhisattvas,<sup>42</sup> there is a receptivity for both sharp and dull capacities that is sudden.
- \* Through the general doctrine common to all those on the three vehicles<sup>52</sup> & the doctrine of the three baskets<sup>42</sup> for those only on the two lesser vehicles there is a receptivity for these two kinds of capacities that is more gradual.
- \* Those on the two lesser vehicles are said to have duller capacities while those on the greater vehicle are said to have sharper capacities.
- \* The capacities of those on the two lesser vehicles are said to be sharper than those who are in the spheres of heaven and human social personality.<sup>82</sup>
- \* And whether they are sharp or dull, in the receptivity of sentient beings throughout the ten spheres of life’s purpose for virtuous capacities, there is no use for evil purposes. Evil purposes are neither a conditional nor a revealing cause of enlightenment.<sup>40</sup>
- \* The One Who Has Descended Into This World has completely illuminated all the virtuous spiritual capacities of sentient beings in the ten spheres of life’s purpose and, in adapting to these conditions, **responded to deliver them (zui sho ō do, 隨所應度)**. And so there are all the abundant benefits that have been manifested in terms of visual forms & voiced sounds.<sup>43</sup>

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2. From **Here and there I have taught of myself ... (shosho jisetsu, 處處自說 ...)**, there is an explanation of how this spiritual life responds with manifestations of itself that bestow the benefits of spiritual transformation on sentient beings. This is in two parts:
  - a. First there are the benefits that are manifested as visible forms and voiced sounds.<sup>43</sup>
  - b. Then there is bestowal of benefits that bring about joyfulness and contentment.



- a. On the benefits that are manifested in terms of visible forms and voiced sounds:<sup>43</sup>
  1. First, there is a part on the benefits of visual forms
  2. Then there is a part on the benefits of voiced sounds
1. First, there are the benefits in terms of visual forms; This is also in two parts:
  - a. First, there is a part on this spiritual life being without birth, yet manifesting its birth.
  - b. Then there is a part on it being without extinction, yet manifesting its extinction.
- a. On this spiritual life being without birth, yet manifesting its birth (arising in this world):

處 處 自 說, 名 字 不 同、 年 紀 大 小,  
 sho sho ji setsu, myō ji fu dō, nen ki dai shō,  
 Here there self teach, names terms not same, years periods great small,

**“Here and there I have taught of myself with different names and terms for various periods of time, great and small ...”**

- \* **I have taught of myself with different names & terms (jishetsu myōji fudō, 自說名字不同):** Having already manifested a visible (physical) form, it follows that there is a name for it. Conversely, in causing there to be a name, there is the summoning of a visible form. Just as receptivity for virtuous spiritual capacities can be great or small, visible forms can have varying degrees of efficacy (in transforming sentient beings). And just as there are different visual forms, so there are various names for them that are not the same.
- \* **For various periods of time, great and small (nenki daishō, 年紀大小):** There are different visual forms (that spiritually transform sentient beings) with varying degrees of efficacy (and so having more enduring effects).
  - \* In lacking efficacy there is a lesser response (to the needs of sentient beings).
  - \* Upon having efficacy there is a greater response.
- \* **Different names and terms (myōji fudō, 名字不同):** This can be a reference to the different names of the two (kinds of) Buddhas, one manifesting a lifespan that is measurable, the other a lifespan that is without measure.
- \* **Here and there (shosho, 處處):** This is a reference to the different places (where the Buddha is found). Vertically it can refer to different places (in time) where here and there causes have been made throughout the past while horizontally it can refer to different places in the ten directions (of space).
- \* **Different names and terms (myōji fudō, 名字不同):**
  - \* In terms of places in the vertical sphere, there are the different names for the Buddha’s physical and spiritual life, like the response of the manifestation (S. nirmāṇa kāya, 應身) now (as the Buddha Śākyamuni) and those of times past like the Buddha named ‘Steadily Shining Beacon’ (S. Dīpaṅkara, J. Nendō Butsu, 然燈佛) and others.
  - \* In terms of the horizontal sphere, there are also different names for the Buddha’s physical and spiritual life, like the countless emanations (S. ātma bhāva vighraha, 分身)<sup>16</sup> of Śākyamuni in this sūtra (particularly as described in chapter eleven On the Vision of the Treasure Tower), the ten names of the Buddha described in The Garland (Avataṃsaka) Sūtra<sup>76</sup> and all the other different names for the Buddha Śākyamuni - up to a thousand that were not the same.

And many sūtras have described the three-fold spiritual life (S. tri kāya, 三身)<sup>4</sup> of the Buddha with different names to summon the different aspects of its single existential nature.



- \* Some said Vairocana (釋迦)<sup>8</sup> was the existential nature of its purpose (S. dharma kāya, 法身).
- \* Some said Rocana (舍那)<sup>8</sup> was the reward of grace descending from it (S. sambhoga kāya, 報身).
- \* Some said Śākya (釋迦)<sup>8</sup> was the response of its manifestation (S. nirmāṇa kāya, 應身) in this world (in accordance with the needs of sentient beings).

This spiritual life has also been described by different terms such as:

- \* The transcendental nature that is just as-it-is (S. bhūta tathatā, 如如),
- \* The transcendental meaning found in the mutually dependent aspects of life's purpose (S. tattvasya lakṣaṇam, 實相),<sup>3</sup>
- \* The ultimate meaning (S. paramārtha, 第一義) of life's purpose,
- \* The transcendental discernment of life's purpose (S. prajñā, 般若) &
- \* The heroic course (S. śūraṅgama, 楞嚴) (of the bodhisattva practice)

This demonstrates that the spiritual life manifested in the sphere of enlightenment has **many different names and terms (myōji fudō, 名字不同)**. When the different names for the nine other spiritual realms are also manifested, it follows that there is a limitless and boundless number of names and terms for the transcendental sphere of life's purpose (S. dharma dhātu, 法界) that can be constructed by the mind.

- \* **Varying periods of time, great and small (nenki daishō, 年紀大小):** This explains that the lifespans can be either long or short, with these different manifestations of the spiritual life constituting its response (S. nirmāṇa kāya, 應身) to the needs of sentient beings. There are sūtras that spoke of the life of the Buddha Kāśyapa<sup>8</sup> having lasted for 20,000 kalpas and predicting that the Buddha Maitreya's<sup>8</sup> life would last for 80,000 kalpas.<sup>9</sup> Many different spiritual transmissions were described and this way one can recognize and distinguish the great from the small as well as the vertically deep from the horizontally broad. The Profound Meaning of The Lotus Sūtra (C. Fǎhuá Xuányì, J. Hokke Gengi, 法華玄義) describes the relative greatness and smallness of these three aspects that are found in the spiritual life of the Buddha.
- \* Some wish to make distinctions between these three aspects of the spiritual life, making them great or small in relation to one another. Some hold that the three lives are small when divided apart but great when united together, or that they are like the three points of a triangle. Whether seen as long or short, all three of these aspects of the Buddha's spiritual life are manifested in order to respond to the needs of sentient beings and so deliver them.

b. Then there is a part on it being without extinction, yet manifesting its extinction.

亦 復 現 言 當 入 涅 槃,  
yaku bu gen gon tō nyū ne han,  
also again present word must enter (nirvāṇa),

“... and then again presented the words ‘I must enter into nirvāṇa’”.

- \* **And then again presented the words ‘I must enter into nirvāṇa’ (yakubu gengen tō nyū nehan, 亦復現言當入涅槃):** The Buddha also responds to sentient beings by perishing from this world in order to accomplish their spiritual deliverance. This is ‘the manifestation of extinction’.<sup>71</sup> By making sentient beings yearn with reverence, they will attain emancipation. The meaning of this will be presented later in the illustration of the doctor and his children.

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2. On the manifestation of benefits in terms of the voiced sounds (of this spiritual life).<sup>43</sup>

又 以 種 種 方 便 說 微 妙 法,  
u i shu ju hō ben setsu mi myō hō.  
And with kinds kinds ways means, taught subtle wondrous purpose.

“And with various ways and means I have taught about life’s most sublime purpose ....”

- \* With a smaller life there is a shorter lifespan. This is the teaching that gradually awakens. Because of this, the sūtra speaks about the **various ways & means (shuju hōben, 種種方便)**.
- \* With a greater life there is a longer lifespan. This is the teaching that suddenly awakens. Because of this, the sūtra speaks of the Buddha having **taught about life’s most sublime purpose (setsu mimyō hō, 說微妙法)**.

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b. On the benefits from bringing about joy & contentment

能 令 眾 生 發 歡 喜 心。  
nō ryō shu jō hok- kan gi shin  
able make host of living inspire elated joyous mind.

“... and have been able to make sentient beings inspire a joyful mind.”

Although sentient beings may begin gradually, they are later made to enter into that which is great. Therefore, it is said that all are made to attain joyfulness. When bestowing this joy, they influence and transform others so that they too attain the benefits (of this spiritual life). The Buddha depended upon four different means to accomplish the objective of enlightening sentient beings (S. catvāri siddhānta, 四悉檀),<sup>44</sup> bestow the benefits of visual forms and voiced sounds and make sentient beings attained four kinds of benefits.<sup>43</sup> This is called ‘the capacity that is based on joyful acceptance (S. anumodanā, 隨喜)’.<sup>45</sup> There is distress upon opposing this capacity. Later, the words of the chapter will say:

“All of it is true and without any falsehood.” (kaijitsu fuko, 皆實不虛)

This has the same meaning.

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2. From **Good sons! The One Who Has Descended Into This World sees that sentient beings ... (shozen nanshi! nyorai ken sho shujō, 諸善男子如來見諸眾生 ...)**, there is a part on the benefits bestowed by this spiritual life in the present. In the present there are the benefits being attained through the resolve of meditation called ‘the power of the lion’s confident stride’ (S. simha vikrīḍita samādhi, 師子奮迅). This state of resolve is said to be endowed with ten kinds of merits and virtues:

- #1 Distinguishing other people’s capacities, whether or not they have matured and whether or not they are pure of affliction<sup>51</sup>
- #2 Through turning the wheel of life’s purpose,<sup>56</sup> The One Who Has Descended Into This World instructs those who have not yet been delivered (from affliction) about how to enter into the disciplines of awakening to life’s true purpose.

- #3 Making a broad vow that fills the ten directions with the sound of the voice is also like this. For some, a single sound fills the whole universe. For others, there are a hundred thousand different sounds that fill it, instructing all different kinds of people.
- #4 Upon turning the supreme wheel of life's purpose,<sup>56</sup> all sentient beings are transformed, making them all attain spiritual freedom and deliverance from their afflictions; Others are unable to turn this *supreme* wheel. Only the Buddha is able to do so.
- #5 Being able to show that one has left home,<sup>58</sup> shaved one's hair, embraced the precepts of moral commitment and become a messenger of joy and contentment to humanity.
- #6 Having an inner nature and outer conduct that are both empty and devoid of any ulterior motive with afflicted intent.<sup>51</sup>
- #7 Emitting the light of spiritual freedom (S. nirvāṇa, 滅) that is revealed upon perishing from this world. Some still live, some have died. In some, the signs and characteristics of virtue have been revealed. In some they have been hidden.
- #8 Defeating and subduing the four devils<sup>47</sup>
- #9 Guiding others so that they too may enter into and reach the essence of meditation with introspection and stillness of mind (S. śamatha vipaśyanā, 止觀).
- #10 Being endowed with the ten kinds of virtuous conduct (S. daśa kuśalāḥ karma pathāḥ, 十善業道) - the three of the body (deeds), the four of the mouth (words) and the three of the mind (thoughts).<sup>48</sup>

The words on the benefits from this spiritual life in the present are in two parts:

- a. The Buddha's sympathy for the potential capacities of sentient beings (or lack of them) that lead them to be receptive to this three-fold spiritual life
  - b. The response of a manifestation of the Buddha's life that spiritually transforms them
- a. The sympathy (S. upanayana, 感) of the Buddha for the potential capacity or 'receptivity' (S. āśaya, 機) of sentient beings (or lack of it) that draws them towards the spiritual life:<sup>39</sup>

「諸 善 男 子! 如 來 見 諸 眾 生 樂 於 小 法、  
 sho zen nan shi nyo rai ken sho shu jō gyō o shō bō,  
 All good (sons) Thus Come sees all host of living pleased in small things,

德 薄 垢 重 者,  
 toku hak- ku jū sha,  
 virtue weak tainted heavily beings,

**“Good sons, The One Who Has Descended Into This World sees sentient beings finding contentment in lesser purposes, heavily tainted with afflictions and weak in virtue.”**

- \* **The One Who Has Descended Into This World sees (nyorai ken, 如來見):** This is a reference to the eye of enlightenment (S. buddha cakṣus, 佛眼).
- \* **Sentient beings finding contentment in lesser purposes (sho shujō gyō o shōbō, 諸眾生樂於小法):** This is the (limitation or 'measure' of) spiritual receptivity that is seen. On this, The Garland Sūtra says:  
 “Although a great many are pure (of affliction),  
 They find contentment in lesser purposes.  
 Some bear doubts and worries,  
 And long nights weakened with distress.

Pitying them causes me to be silent.”  
 And another verse in The Garland Sūtra says:  
 “Others have not yet practiced long  
 Their knowledge not yet illuminated (by spiritual awakening).  
 Depending on sensory consciousness (vijñāna, 識) but lacking transcendental knowledge  
 (jñāna, 智),<sup>49</sup>  
 They have heard the Buddha’s words but have only been distressed by them,  
 And so they have fallen into the path of evil.  
 Being mindful of this, I do not address them.”

According to these passages, not only spiritual disciples on the two vehicles but all of those who have not practiced long find contentment in lesser purposes.

On this, Huisi (慧思), the Great Master of Nányuè (南嶽大師)<sup>2</sup> said:

“Finding contentment in lesser purposes does not just refer to those on the two lesser vehicles (focused on their own deliverance). Those who find contentment in any teachings about the immediate reality (here & now) are finding contentment in lesser purposes.”

Now we must generally explain this:

- a. Upon finding contentment in the twenty-five states of sentient existence,<sup>50</sup> there are the spiritual capacities of those at the social level found in human personality and the divine level found in the heavens of meditation. About them it is said “When they come and reach me here, they are said to find contentment in lesser purposes.”
- b. Upon finding contentment in attaining spiritual freedom from affliction through their own emancipation from it, there is the spiritual capacity of those on the two vehicles (students of life’s purpose and those awakened to the afflicted nature of sentient existence in their own lives). “When they come and reach me here, they are said to find contentment in lesser purposes.”
- c. Upon finding contentment in the practice of ever greater purposes on the noble path, there is the spiritual capacity of the bodhisattvas. “When they come and reach me here, they too are said to find contentment in lesser purposes.”

\* **Weak in virtue (toku kaku, 德薄):** This refers to the skillful application of the conditional and revealing causes of enlightenment<sup>40</sup> being weak and inadequate. As it says in the third chapter of this sūtra On the Parable of the Burning House, “these children are still young and immature.”

\* **Heavily tainted with afflictions (kuju, 垢重):** This refers to those with false beliefs (S. kudṛṣṭi, 邪見) and intentions (S. cintanā, 思)<sup>51</sup> with afflicted ulterior motives that have not yet been eliminated.

Question: In being without birth and yet manifesting birth (arising in this world), the Buddha’s spiritual life furnishes sentient beings with all kinds of gradual and sudden transformative influence, including the seven kinds of skillful ways & means,<sup>21</sup> etc. Only through the doctrine that is sudden and perfect<sup>42</sup> is there the response of a manifestation of this spiritual life (S. nirmāṇa kāya, 應身) that teaches them in accordance with their receptivity for finding contentment in life’s greatest purpose. How does one then determine what is and what is not finding contentment in lesser purposes?

Answer: We have briefly outlined this idea and will now elaborate on it in four parts:

1. The day of the vow to leave home:<sup>58</sup> Although one may first inspire thoughts that awaken one to life’s greater purpose, one may be unable to maintain one’s resolve. In having too many attachments to sensory desire, one cannot transcend this world. These attachments are said to be the lesser purposes found in the vices of sensory desire.

2. Living in the present (here & now): This is comparable with those who lived before the Buddha appeared in this world. Although there were many in the heavens of meditation and the human sphere of social personality that had developed greater capacities for virtue, their minds were still tainted by worldly desires and attachments to false beliefs (in the three-fold sphere of sentient existence).<sup>60</sup> This is also called ‘finding contentment in lesser purposes’.

These first two are a reference to those who later in this chapter (in the illustration of the good doctor) will be described as “**writhing on the ground**” (**enden uji**, 宛轉于地).

3. Cultivating one’s practice: Although there are those who do not find contentment in the lesser purposes found in the three-fold sphere of sentient existence<sup>60</sup> such as the vices of sensory desire, they still find contentment in being detached from them. This is also said to be ‘finding contentment in lesser purposes’.
4. Attaining the fruit of enlightenment: Then there are those who find contentment in the immediate (shorter range) teaching about one becoming small, leaving the palace of the Śākya clan and then first attaining enlightenment. If one is not finding contentment in the very long noble path that lasts for all of eternity, one is said to still be finding it in lesser purposes.

Those with small minds do not really first attain enlightenment in this lifetime. Once one has found contentment in that which is great, the Buddha will no longer need to teach about first attaining enlightenment. All of the teachings about first attaining enlightenment are about **finding contentment in lesser purposes** (**gyō o shōbō**, 樂於小法).

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- b. From **For these people I have taught ...** (**i ze nin setsu**, 為是人說 ...), there is the Buddha’s spiritual life responding with a manifestation (**S. nirmāṛtā**, 應化) that transforms sentient beings in the present: This is in two parts:

1. Being without birth, yet manifesting its birth (arising in this world)
2. Being without extinction, yet manifesting its extinction (perishing from this world)

1. Being without birth and yet manifesting its birth is also in two parts
  - a. Manifesting the birth of the spiritual life in this world
  - b. The benefits that are attained from this

- a. Manifesting its birth in this world is further divided into two parts
  1. Manifesting its birth (arising in this world)
  2. Being without birth (neither arising nor perishing)

1. In manifesting its birth, there is the arising of a manifestation or ‘footprint’ of the spiritual life of enlightenment (**S. nirmāṇa buddha**, 迹佛). Without it being born in this world, there would not be any such ‘first arising’ (attaining) of this enlightenment.

為 是 人 說：『我 少 出 家， 得 阿 耨 多 羅 三 藐 三 菩 提。』  
**i ze nin setsu ga shō shuk- ke, toku a noku ta ra san myaku san bo dai.**  
**For these people taught I young left home, attained (anuttara) (samyak) (sambodhi).**

**“For these people I have taught that I left home when young and then attained the supreme universal enlightenment (anuttara samyak sambodhi).”**



**For these people I have taught (i ze nin setsu, 為是人説)** that I first attained enlightenment: First it was taught that sentient beings of both sharp & dull spiritual capacities have receptivity for being drawn towards the Buddha's spiritual life. Now we explain the greater and the lesser responses through the manifestations of this life.<sup>39</sup>

\* The lesser responses are for those with duller spiritual capacities (S. mṛdv indriya, 鈍根).

\* The greater responses are for those with sharper spiritual capacities (S. tīkṣṇa indriya, 利根). These responses arise ('are born') in this world both as a physical life (S. janma kāya, 生身) and a spiritual life (S. dharma kāya, 法身).

a. The arising of the lesser responses of the Buddha's physical and spiritual life:

1. With transcendental discernment of life's purpose being entrusted in his mother's womb, Śākyamuni was physically born into this world and took seven steps (S. sapta krama, 七歩),<sup>21</sup> as described by Kātyāyanī Putra.<sup>53</sup> After six years of ascetic practice, *the Buddha's life was physically reborn in this world.*

2. Through cultivating the thirty-four states of cultivation (三十四心)<sup>54</sup> that sever false beliefs and intentions with afflicted ulterior motives, he was freed from the five kinds of habitual attachments (S. pañca vāsanā, 五住)<sup>55</sup> and attained the five projections of unafflicted purpose (S. asamasama pañca skandha, 五分法身).<sup>62</sup> *This was the arising of the Buddha's spiritual life in this world.*

b. The arising of the greater response of this dual life:

1. *The arising of the greater response of the physical life.* As The Garland Sūtra, The Nirvāṇa Sūtra and other sūtras say:

"With all the other bodhisattvas in Māyā's womb<sup>57</sup>

Ever teaching about the greater vehicle of life's purpose

Each was born into this world and took seven steps in the ten directions."<sup>53</sup>

This was said to be about the greater birth of the physical life.

2. *The arising of the greater response of the spiritual life:* At the site where he cultivated the noble path (S. bodhi maṇḍa, 道場)<sup>19</sup> and realized the serene transcendence of the great spiritual freedom (nirvāṇa), the Buddha's mind was indestructible like a diamond. With all ignorance destroyed, there was attainment of a most sublime spiritual awakening (S. anuttara samyak sambodhi, 妙覺) that corresponds with the discernment fathoming the transcendental nature of life's purpose. A myriad virtues arose from this seed of transcendental knowledge, with everything being endowed with a universal brilliance. This was said to be about the greater arising (rebirth) of the spiritual life.

**Left home (shukke, 出家):<sup>58</sup>**

\* In the lesser response there was leaving home through the different steps on the noble path.

\* In the greater response there was leaving the home that is the dual (afflicted) nature of mortal existence in this world (through the dialectical principle).

**Attained the supreme universal enlightenment (toku anokutara sanmyaku sanbodai,**

阿耨多羅三藐三菩提):

\* In the lesser response, this awakening (S. bodhi, 菩提) was attaining (student's) knowledge of the four truths,<sup>32</sup> inspiring the (self-enlightened) knowledge that without affliction, and fathoming the (bodhisattva's) knowledge of life's purpose that neither arises nor perishes and transcends one's own life in this world.<sup>59</sup>

\* In the greater response, this was illumination of the three truths,<sup>32</sup> the transcendental reality of the one universal path of enlightenment and knowledge of the ultimate purpose for all things (S. sarvathā jñāna, 一切種智).<sup>25</sup>

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## 2. Being without birth & yet manifesting birth

然 我 實 成 佛 已 來 久 遠 若 斯,  
nen ga jitsu jō butsu i rai ku on nyaku shi,  
In fact I really became Buddha already came eternal distance if this,

但 以 方 便, 教 化 眾 生, 令 入 佛 道, 作 如 是 說。  
tan i hō ben, kyō ke shu jō, ryō nyū butsu dō, sa nyo ze setsu  
but by ways means, teach transform all living, make enter Buddha path, do like this to teach.

**“In reality I have already attained enlightenment and descended into this world for all of eternity, if anything. However, through using ways and means I have instructed and spiritually transformed sentient beings, making them enter into the path of enlightenment. I have done these things in order to teach them.”**

- \* **In reality I have already attained enlightenment and descended into this world ... (nen gajitsu jōbutsu irai, 然我實成佛已來 ...):** This describes the original (transcendental, timeless & eternal) reality that is without birth (neither arising nor perishing). However, those in the heavens (of meditation - S. deva, 天), human beings (those engaged in social interaction - S. manuṣya, 人) and those driven by pride (S. asuras, 阿修羅) see both a physical life and a spiritual life and speak of the Buddha first being born (arising) in this world. This is based on what is not so **in (the transcendental) reality (nen, 然)**.
- \* In fact, the Buddha has already attained a physical life and a spiritual life from the eternal past. The birth that appears now is not the real (transcendental) birth and so the sūtra speaks of the Buddha having attained enlightenment **for all of eternity, if anything (kuon nyaku shi, 久遠若斯)**. **If anything (nyaku shi, 若斯)** here refers to being longer than the previously described illustration (earlier in this chapter).
- \* **However, through using ways & means (tan i hōben, 但以方便):**  
Question: Having explained that the (spiritual life of the) Buddha is really without birth (neither arises not perishes), why does the Buddha manifest his birth (in this world)?  
Answer: This is done to benefit people who find contentment in lesser purposes, those who are heavily tainted by affliction and weak in virtue, by causing them to take to the path of enlightenment. It is for this reason that the sūtra says **“However, through using ways and means I have instructed and spiritually transformed sentient beings” (tan i hōben kyōke shujō, 但以方便教化眾生)**.
- \* **I have done these things in order to teach them (sa nyoze setsu, 作如是說):** This is called ‘being without birth, and yet teaching of one’s birth’.  
Question: Other sūtras refute the fallacies found in the ideas about the birth and non-birth of the lesser responses of the Buddha’s physical life, but they still do not refute the idea of the birth and non-birth of the lesser responses of the Buddha’s spiritual life. Now this sūtra even refutes the idea of the greater response of the spiritual life being born (arising) or not being born (not arising). Why is this so?  
Answer: **In reality I have already attained enlightenment and descended into this world for all of eternity, if anything (gajitsu jōbutsi irai nyaku shi, 我實成佛已來久遠若斯)**, and so we now recognize that both the greater and lesser responses of the spiritual life arise from



this world. They are all accepted (through faith) and then let go (through transcendental discernment). This way it is explained that the Buddhas are all born and yet they are all beyond birth. This teaching is very different from other sūtras.

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- b. From **The One Who Has Descended Into This world has propagated** (nyorai sho en, 如來所演 ...), there is an explanation of the benefits of visible forms and voiced sounds from manifesting birth (arising) in this world, in two parts:
1. First, describing the benefits of visible forms and voiced sounds<sup>43</sup>
  2. Then, explaining that about them which is without any falsehood

1. The visible and voiced benefits (from the response of the Buddha's spiritual life)

諸 善 男 子! 如 來 所 演 經 典, 皆 為 度 脫 眾 生,  
 sho zen nan shi! nyo rai sho en kyō den, kai i do dats- shu jō,  
 All good (sons)! Thus Come here spreads scripture canon, all to deliver liberate host living,

或 說 己 身、或 說 他 身, 或 示 己 身、  
 waku set- ko shin, waku set- ta shin, waku ji ko shin,  
 some teaches own life, some teaches others' lives, some shows own life,  
 或 示 他 身, 或 示 己 事、或 示 他 事,  
 waku ji ta shin, waku ji ko ji, waku ji ta ji,  
 some shows other's lives, some shows own work, some shows others' work,

**“Good sons, The One Who Has Descended Into This World has propagated the teachings of the scriptures to spiritually deliver and emancipate sentient beings:**

**Some teaching through my own life, some teaching through the life of another.**

**Some revealing my own life, some revealing the life of another.**

**Some revealing my own work, some revealing the work of another.”**

- \* **Teaching (setsu, 說)** refers to the voicing of the doctrine from this spiritual life.
- \* **Revealing (ji, 示)** is a reference to showing its visual form.
- \* Voiced sounds and visible forms do not go beyond the limits of **self (ko, 己)** & **other (ta, 他)**.
  - \* When teaching about the spiritual life (S. dharma kāya, 法身), there is a **teaching through one's own life (set koshin, 說己身)**.
  - \* When teaching about the response of the spiritual life (S. nirmāṇa kāya, 應身), there is a **teaching through the life of another (set tashin, 說他身)**.
  - \* When the Buddha Śākyamuni spoke of meeting the Buddha ‘Steadily Shining Beacon’ (Dīpaṅkara, 然燈佛), there was **teaching through his own life (set koshin, 說己身)**.
  - \* When the Buddha Śākyamuni spoke of the Buddha ‘Steadily Shining Beacon’<sup>8</sup> being his spiritual teacher, there was **teaching through the life of another (set tashin, 說他身)**.
- \* Showing the reward of grace descending directly from the Buddha's actions (S. svakarma phala, J. shōhō, 正報) is **revealing his own work (ji koji, 示己事)**.
- \* Showing the reward of grace descending from the environment (the Pure Lands in the ten directions)<sup>10</sup> the Buddha depended upon (S. parakarma phala, J. ehō, 依報), there was **revealing the work of another (ji taji, 示他事)**.

- \* Following the words and ideas of others is **teaching through the life of another (set tashin, 說他身)**. Following one's own words and ideas is **teaching through one's own life (set koshin, 說己身)**. Revealing one's own work and the work of others is also like this.

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2. From **All of this has been said to teach, all of it is true and without any falsehood ... (shosho gonsetsu, kai jitsu fuko ..., 諸所言說, 皆實不虛 ...)** there is a part on that which is without any of the falsehood found in illusions. This is also in two parts:
- First the sūtra explains that which is without any of the falsehoods found in illusions.
  - Then it explains why it is without this falsehood
- a. Explaining that which is without any of the falsehoods found in illusions:

諸 所 言 說, 皆 實 不 虛。  
 sho sho gon setsu, kai jitsu fu ko.  
 All here said to teach, all true not false.

**“All of this has been said to teach, all of it is true and without any falsehoods.”**

First, there is (partiality towards) the tangibly voiced and visual benefits that are without any of the falsehoods found in illusions (S. mṛṣā, 虛): Those with receptivity<sup>39</sup> for both sudden and gradual kinds of transformative influence attain all of the benefits descending from the visual forms and voiced sounds of the Buddha's spiritual life that are without any of the falsehood found in illusions. In the previous section on the benefits of the past, it was explained that all sentient beings are made to attain joyfulness, which is then also described as 'worldly benefits'. Now it has been further explained that these benefits too are without any falsehood. Through both the lesser and greater responses of this spiritual life, there are all the different kinds of benefits from visual forms and voiced sounds<sup>43</sup> that are adaptations to those with a receptivity for understanding through the gradual and sudden doctrines.<sup>42</sup> Upon successfully accomplishing the objective of enlightening sentient beings through the four different means (S. catvāri siddhānta, 四悉檀),<sup>44</sup> all of these benefits are said to be **without any falsehoods (fu ko, 不虛)**.

The Commentary on the Longer Sūtra About the Deliverance of Transcendental Discernment (Mahā Prajñā Pāramitā Upadeśa, 大智度論)<sup>26</sup> explains that all four of these different means of accomplishing the objective<sup>44</sup> are equally valid. Therefore, the worldly means of adapting to people's desires (S. laukika siddhānta, 世界悉檀) are valid, as are those from the inspirational means of arousing worthy & noble spiritual capacities (S. prāti pauruṣika siddhānta, 為人悉檀) and therapeutic means of correcting errors & sicknesses (S. prati pākṣika siddhānta, 對治悉檀). These first three are collectively called 'the different means utilizing the realities of this world'. This reality is based on the falsehoods and illusions found in this world, but in adapting to these different conditions, they are also said to be 'the three realities of this world'. The fourth means is the one of ultimate significance (S. pāramārthika siddhānta, 第一義悉檀), which is awakening to the dialectical principle of the middle way (S. madhyāma pratipad, 中道). It too is (partially) based on that which is false.

When explaining this reality and falsehood in terms of the two gateways of penetrating the source & manifestation (J. honmon, 本門 & shakumon, 迹門) of enlightenment, there is an understanding of the gradual and sudden benefits found in both reality and illusions:

- \* With practices that are the ways & means from the past not yet resulting in the real (transcendental) benefits of the noble path, there are said to be false causes.
- \* With attachments to the immediate manifestations of enlightenment not yet resulting in the real (transcendental) benefits of the original ground (that is timeless & eternal),<sup>23</sup> there are said to be false effects.

Now:

- \* Upon hearing the teaching about the gateway to penetrating the manifestation of enlightenment (J. shakumon, 迹門) there is entry into the transcendental meaning found in the mutually dependent aspects of life's purpose<sup>3</sup> and attainment of the benefits from the real cause.
- \* Upon hearing the teaching about the gateway to penetrating the source of enlightenment (J. honmon, 本門), there is a discarding of attachments to feelings about that which is immediate (here & now) and attainment of the benefits from the real effect that is timeless & eternal.

Now one grasps these two realities, having dealt with the two falsehoods from the teachings of the past. In terms of the perfect and sudden doctrine and the two gateways of manifestation and source, one of them is real and one of them is false.

- \* In grasping the practice in accordance with the dialectical principle of the middle way, people attain the benefits from the real cause.
- \* However, upon having attachments to the immediate effects (here & now), there will still be falsehoods.
- \* Now, upon hearing the explanation of the cause, one does not distinguish and specifically hold onto the benefits of understanding the transcendental meaning found in the mutually dependent aspects of life's purpose.<sup>3</sup>
- \* Upon hearing the explanation of the long-range effect that is timeless & eternal, there is attainment of its real benefits.

Long ago there was the one falsehood. Now there is grasp of the one reality. Because of this, the sūtra says **all of it is true and without any falsehood (kaijitsu fuko, 皆實不虛)**.

Question: Both now and before in (the second chapter of) this sūtra, there is the greater vehicle teaching that reveals the transcendental meaning found in the mutually dependent aspects of life's purpose. Is there a difference between those that are awakened to it before and after this (sixteenth) chapter?

Answer: Upon first entering into the transcendental meaning that is found in the mutually dependent aspects of all of life's purpose (S. sarva dharma tattvasya lakṣaṇa, C. zhūfǎ shíxiāng, J. shohō jissō, 諸法實相), there was a gradual, progressive entry into it until they finally abandoned their grass huts (where each was confined to their own understanding) and suddenly penetrated the dialectic principle. However, entry into it was either gradual or sudden. And so it has always been divided into two different doctrines (based on this distinction). For example, on entering into the transcendental reality (S. paramārtha satya, 真諦), those with duller spiritual capacities depended upon observations of life's purpose that analyzed that which is impermanent. Those with sharper capacities used observations of the existential nature of life's purpose and its nature of emptiness. And so the doctrine of the three baskets was distinguished from the general doctrine.

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- b. From **This is because The One Who Has Descended Into This World has knowledge and vision ... (sho i sha ga? nyorai nyojit- chiken, 所以者何? 如來如實知見 ...)**, there is a general explanation of why these benefits are without any falsehood.

The sūtra explains here that the benefits are without any falsehood, first in terms of visible form and afterwards in terms of the sound of the voice.<sup>43</sup> There are six parts on this:

- #1 The response of the spiritual life (S. nirmāṇa kāya, 應身) is revealed to be inseparable from the existential nature of the spiritual life (S. dharma kāya, 法身).
- #2 The existential nature of this spiritual life is without any specific visible (or physical) form that is separable and it neither arises nor perishes.
- #3 Sentient beings have spiritual capacities that arise and perish in accordance with their receptivity for this spiritual life.
- #4 The power of sympathy from The One Who Has Descended Into this World responds to them and similarly arises and perishes in accordance with this receptivity.
- #5 This vision of The One Who Has Descended Into this World arises from within the sentient beings themselves.
- #6 And so these explain the spiritual life in terms of the three-fold sphere of sentient existence.<sup>60</sup>

This part about why the benefits are without falsehood is also in two parts:

1. Illuminating the (dialectical) principle that is without falsehood.
2. Beginning with **Because all sentient beings have various kinds (i sho shujō u shuju, 以諸眾生有種種 ...)**, there is an explanation of the receptivity of sentient beings for this dialectical principle that is without any falsehood.

Upon realizing this principle and the receptivity for it found in sentient beings, the doctrines establishing it are explained to them without any falsehood.

1. Illuminating the (dialectical) principle that is without any falsehood

所 以 者 何? 如 來 如 實 知 見 三 界 之 相,  
sho i sha ga? nyo rai nyo jit- chi ken san gai shi sō.  
This because it what? Thus Come as-it-is reality knows sees three realm 's aspects,

無 有 生 死、若 退 若 出, 亦 無 在 世 及 滅 度 者,  
mu u shō ji nyaku tai nyaku shutsu yaku mu zai se gyū metsu do sha  
not being life death, whether retreat or approach, also not of world or (extinction) of,

非 實 非 虛, 非 如 非 異, 不 如 三 界 見 於 三 界,  
hi jitsu hi ko, hi nyo hi i, fu nyo san gai ken o san gai  
not substance not emptiness, not same not different, not like three realms see in three realms,

如 斯 之 事, 如 來 明 見, 無 有 錯 謬。  
nyo shi shi ji, nyo rai myō ken, mu u shaku myō.  
like such as these things, Thus Come clearly sees, not have mistake error.

**“This is because The One Who Has Descended Into This World has knowledge and vision of the transcendental meaning found in the mutually dependent aspects of the three-fold sphere of sentient existence.**

**It goes beyond the existence of life and death,**

**Whether retreating from it or approaching it.**

**And, in being neither of this world nor of an extinction that goes beyond it,**

**It is neither a real existence nor an empty falsehood, and**

**It is neither the same as this three-fold sphere nor different from it.**

**Unlike the vision of sentient beings living within this three-fold sphere, The One Who Has Descended Into This World clearly sees everything in it without mistake.”**

**The One Who Has Descended Into This World has knowledge & vision of the transcendental meaning found in the mutually dependent aspects of the three-fold sphere of sentient**

**existence (J. nyorai nyo jit- chicken sangai shisō, 如來如實知見三界之相, S. dr̥ṣṭaṃ hi tathāgatena trai dhātukaṃ yathābhūtaṃ):** This knowledge and vision<sup>25</sup> of sentient existence is in accord with the dialectical principle, illuminating the transcendental reality of its three-fold sphere.<sup>60</sup> This transcendental reality goes beyond the (three) different aspects that cause it.

1. **It goes beyond the existence of life and death (J. mu u shōji, 無有生死, S. na jāyate na mriyate):** This is a reference to the transcendental nature of the dialectical principle going beyond the existential nature of suffering, that is, beyond the duality found in life & death.  
**Whether retreating from it or approaching it (J. nyaku tai nyaku shutsu, 若退若出, S. na cyavate na upadyate):**
  - \* With there being the origination (S. samudaya, 集) of suffering through the nature of affliction (S. kleśa, 煩惱) & actions with consequences (S. karma, 業),<sup>51</sup> there is said to be retreating (S. cyavate, 退) from this principle into the existence of life & death.
  - \* With the fruits of its impermanence being manifested as suffering (duḥkha, 苦), there is said to be approaching (S. upadyate, 出) this principle from the existence of life & death.
2. This dialectical principle goes beyond the life & death of this world (S. na saṃsarati, 無在世), and it also goes beyond the extinction that is entering into the ultimate spiritual freedom from it (S. na parinirvāti, 無滅度). Therefore the sūtra says **it is neither of this world nor of an extinction beyond it (J. yaku muzai se gyū metsudo sha, 亦無在世及滅度者, S. na saṃsarati na parinirvāti).**
3. This principle goes beyond the transcendental reality found in the nature of extinction and beyond the nature of emptiness found in the existence of life & death. And so the sūtra says **it is neither a real existence nor an empty falsehood (J. hijitsu hiko, 非實非虛, S. na bhūtaṃ na abhūtaṃ, na santaṃ na asantaṃ).**
4. In going beyond the different barriers that separate and distinguish the things of this world (S. na anyathā) and beyond the absolute sameness (oneness) of all things that is found beyond this world (S. na tathā), the sūtra says **it is neither the same (as this three-fold sphere of sentient existence) nor different from it (J. hi nyo hi i, 非如非異, S. na tathā na atathā, na vitathā na avitathā).**

These four clarify the dialectical principle of the middle way.

Even when one gets beyond the dilemma found in the duality of the two extremes, one still concludes by settling on one of the four extremes found in the tetralemma.<sup>29</sup> For example:



- \* The dilemma about whether or not there is the birth of a distinct, separate life is resolved by there being (the principle of) that which is beyond life & death (S. na jāyate na mriyate).
- \* The dilemma about whether or not there is the death of a distinct, separate life is resolved by there being both life & death.
- \* The dilemma about whether or not there is retreating from the dialectical principle into life & death is resolved by there being both retreating from it and approaching it.
- \* The dilemma about whether or not there is approaching the dialectical principle from life & death is resolved by there being that which is beyond approaching it and retreating from it (S. na cyavate na upapadyate).
- \* The dilemma about whether or not this transcendental meaning of life has a real existence (on its own) is resolved by it being neither an empty falsehood nor a real existence (S. na bhūtaṃ na abhūtaṃ).
- \* The dilemma about whether or not it is an empty falsehood is resolved by it having both an empty falsehood and a real existence.

All systems of logic like this are ultimately erroneous. And so, after concluding that the single, double and multiple ways of trying to cognitively grasp the transcendental nature of reality are all ultimately mistaken, the real meaning of the dialectical principle is finally revealed.

In being **unlike the vision of sentient beings living within this three-fold sphere** (fu nyo sangai ken o sangai, 不如三界見於三界, S. na tathā traidhātukaṃ tathāgatena dṛṣṭaṃ yathā bāla pṛthagjanāḥ paśyanti), it is unlike the dualistic way that sentient beings see the mutually dependent aspects found in the three-fold sphere of sentient existence.<sup>60</sup> Only through the enlightened vision of the Buddha is there illumination of the ultimate transcendental reality of this three-fold sphere (that **clearly sees everything in it without mistake** (J. nyo shi shi ji, nyorai myōken, mu u shakumyō, 如斯之事, 如來明見, 無有錯謬, S. tathāgatena dṛṣṭaṃ yathā bāla pṛthagjanāḥ paśyanti)). This inner endowment with transcendental knowledge (of its ultimate purpose) is applied through following one's own ideas and words. This is also called 'sometimes teaching of one's own life and one's own work'. And so The Longer Version of The Sūtra About the Deliverance of Transcendental Discernment (Mahā Prajñā Pāramitā Sūtra, 摩訶般若波羅蜜多經) says:

"The ultimate meaning (of the dialectical principle) goes beyond any distinctions of its different mutually dependent aspects."

Through the provisional knowledge of The One Who Has Descended Into This World, measured as it is, there is a transcendental knowledge and vision of the mutually dependent aspects found in this three-fold sphere. Although it has similarities with the knowledge and vision of sentient beings living in the three-fold sphere, this knowledge & vision transcends the dual nature found in the mortal existence of this world. Nevertheless, in following the ideas of others, it is revealed through the dual nature of this mortal existence.

- \* **It goes beyond the existence of life & death, whether retreating from it or approaching it** (mu u shōji nyaku tai nyaku shutsu, 無有生死, 若退若出). However, in following the ideas of others, there are teachings about retreating from it and approaching it.
- \* **It is neither of this world nor of an extinction beyond it** (yaku muzai se gyū metsudo sha, 亦無在世及滅度者). However, in following the ideas of others, there is the revealing of the Buddha's birth in this world and his entry into extinction as well as teaching about one's own birth in this world and one's own extinction.
- \* Although **it is not a real existence** (hijitsu, 非實非虛), one speaks about the real existence of spiritual freedom (S. nirvāṇa). Although **it is not an empty falsehood** (hiko, 非虛), one speaks about the emptiness and falsehood of the three-fold sphere of sentient existence.<sup>60</sup>

- \* The past, present and future are (ultimately) **not different** (**hi i**, 非異) and yet one speaks of their different distinctions. The transcendental reality is **not the same** (**hi nyo**, 非如) everywhere and yet one speaks of it being the same everywhere.

In being the same as how those in the three-fold sphere see it, there is following the ideas and words of others. This is called ‘teaching and revealing of the lives and the work of others’. The dual (provisional & transcendental) knowledge of The One Who Has Descended Into This World clearly investigates the truths of duality.<sup>32</sup> Through this, there are the benefits of visible forms & voiced sounds. **All of it is true and without any falsehood** (**kaijitsu fuko**, 皆實不虛).

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2. Beginning with **Because sentient beings exhibit different kinds of ...** (**i sho shujō u shuju**, 以諸眾生有種種...), there is an explanation of the spiritual receptivities of sentient beings that are not false. This in two parts:
- First, the sūtra describes the receptivities or ‘potential capacities’ (**āśaya**, 機) of sentient beings for which the Buddha’s spiritual life has sympathies (**upanayana**, 感).
  - Then it discusses the Buddha’s response (**nirmāṇa**, 應), the bestowing of manifestations with spiritually transformative influence.

- a. The receptivities of sentient beings for which the Buddha has sympathies

以 諸 眾 生 有 種 種 性、 種 種 欲、  
i sho shu jō u shu ju shō, shu ju yoku,  
Because all host of living have kinds kinds natures, kinds kinds desires,

種 種 行、 種 種 憶 想 分 別 故、  
shu ju gyō, shu ju oku sō fun- bet ko,  
kinds kinds practices, kinds kinds ideas thoughts (distinguish) so,

**“Because sentient beings have different kinds of natures and aspirations, exhibit different kinds of conduct, and make different kinds of mental distinctions and associations, all of these are distinguished so that ...”**

Because sentient beings have different kinds of receptivity (potential capacities) that are either sharp or dull, there are the different kinds of sudden and gradual influences on them that are not the same. The different kinds of natures, aspirations, conduct and thoughts found in sentient beings are distinguished, and their aspirations are directed towards the development of virtuous spiritual capacities or ‘good roots’ (**S. kuśala mūla**, 善根). For this reason, The One Who Has Descended Into This World has taught different doctrines about life’s purpose in terms of self and other, explaining the various kinds of causes and conditions for awakening this purpose and using different metaphors to describe it that are without any falsehood. There are various different kinds of natural (innate) capacities in sentient beings that are subject to gradual and sudden transformative influence. To have this spiritual influence, it is necessary to use different means of arousing (inspiring) worthy and noble capacities on a personal level (**S. prātipauruṣika siddhānta**, 為人悉檀).<sup>44</sup>

Question: Innate capacities for virtue receptive to the transcendental nature are called natures (**S. prakṛti**, **J. shō**, 性). (The Sanskrit version of the sūtra does mention a name for this here).



With aspirations (S. abhiprāya, J. yoku, 欲) being learned and cultivated over time through reinforcement (S. samudānīta, 習欲成性), they eventually become natural capacities. Why does the sūtra now speak of **natures (shō, 性)** first and **aspirations (yoku, 欲)** afterward?

Answer: Because of the original (innate) nature of spiritual capacities, they are able to arouse the aspirations that they are now having. This is like saying that emotional disturbances<sup>51</sup> (S. kleśa, 煩惱) are the cause of the five (afflicted) projections of life's purpose (S. pañca skandha, 五陰)<sup>62</sup> and these five projections of life's purpose are the cause of emotional disturbances. It is not a matter of one of them coming before or after the other. Natural capacities and cultivated aspirations are also like this. Because of this, the prerequisite for becoming a habitual or cultivated aspiration is being a natural capacity (and vice versa).

On cultivated capacities:

- \* **Aspirations** (S. abhiprāya, J. yoku): When sentient beings have desires for gradual or sudden kinds of spiritual transformation, it is necessary for the Buddhas to use *worldly means to realize their objective* (S. laukika siddhānta, 世界悉檀)<sup>44</sup> by adapting to their desires.
- \* **Conduct** (S. carita, J. gyō, 行) is putting aspirations into practice. When conduct is in accord with aspirations, consequences (S. karmas, 業) will arise from them.
  - \* In adapting to their aspirations, it is necessary for the Buddhas to use *inspirational means of attaining their objective* (S. prāti pauruṣika siddhānta, 為人悉檀)<sup>44</sup> by arousing their personal capacities that are worthy and noble
  - \* If they have many cravings and attachments in their conduct that cause hindrances and obstacles, it is necessary for the Buddhas to use *therapeutic means of attaining their objective* (S. pratipākṣika siddhānta, 對治悉檀)<sup>44</sup> by correcting their errors and healing their sicknesses
- \* **Mental distinctions and associations** (S. saṃjñā vikalpa, J. okusō, 憶想): Through knowledge and discernment of life's purpose,<sup>25</sup> there is an understanding of the (virtual reality of the) mental constructs that simulate it. Through the cultivation of one's practice, there is an ever greater attainment of this understanding. At first, there is the use of various ways & means but there is not yet said to be a realization of the dialectical principle that is beyond the way of words and language. Still, there is a meditation with mindfulness employing one's mental distinctions and associations about it with introspection, and gradually or suddenly one abides in deeper meditations on one's own existence as an ordinary sentient being, both inside and out. Through an aspiration to attain virtuous spiritual capacities, one cultivates one's practice. Through cultivating this practice, there is an understanding that ever more closely resembles this dialectical principle of the middle way, or 'mean'. It finally becomes necessary to use *the highest means of attaining the objective* (S. pāramārthika siddhānta, 第一義悉檀),<sup>44</sup> which is realizing the greatest significance or 'ultimate meaning'. In attaining this understanding and adapting it to one's mental distinctions and associations through the teachings about life's true purpose, there is this 'ultimate meaning'.

Upon reaching the first level of grounding<sup>33</sup> in joyful acceptance (S. pramuditā bhūmi, 極喜地)<sup>45</sup> of the transcendental nature of life's purpose, there is a further aspiration to cultivate this practice with the objective of reaching the second level of grounding (in its immaculate nature, S. vimalā bhūmi, 離垢地).<sup>33</sup> When one inspires to bring about this second level of grounding, there is the elimination of the distinctions and associations found in meditation and getting beyond all words and language. This progress on the bodhisattva path goes on and on until there is a perfect spiritual awakening characterized by complete freedom from attachments to mental distinctions or associations and a serene illumination that is without interruption.

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- b. From **their aspirations are directed to produce virtuous capacities (yoku ryō shō sho zengon, 欲令生諸善根 ...)**, there is a part on properly dealing with the receptivity of sentient beings through the response of bestowing visual and voiced benefits.<sup>43</sup>

欲 令 生 諸 善 根, 以 若 干 因 緣、 譬 喻、  
yoku ryō shō sho zen gon, i nyak- kan inn- en, hi yu,  
Desires made bear many good roots, by (number of) causes conditions, compare illustrate,

言 辭 種 種 說 法, 所 作 佛 事, 未 曾 暫 廢。  
gon ji shu ju sep- pō, sho sa butsu ji mi zō zan pai.  
words terms kinds kinds teach purpose, here do Buddha's work (not yet) before ever end.

**“...their aspirations can be directed towards the producing of virtuous spiritual capacities. Through various different explanations of the causes and conditions of awakening to life's purpose, illustrations of them that serve as metaphors and the skillful use of words and terms, there are the various teachings about it. This is the Buddha's work that has never ceased.”**

This is about the benefits of voiced benefits from the Buddha's own life as well as from the lives of others that adapt to the receptivity of sentient beings for gradually and suddenly producing virtuous spiritual capacities. In directing them to produce these various kinds of virtuous capacities, or 'good spiritual roots' (kuśala mūla, 諸善根), there is the response of:

- \* (Visual) manifestations of the Buddha's own life and work as well as the lives and works of others
- \* (Audibly) voiced teachings about the Buddha's own life and work as well as the lives and works of others
- \* Explanations of the causes and conditions of awakening to life's purpose as well as metaphors that illustrate them.

When dealing with the receptivity of sentient beings for gradual awakening to life's purpose, there are the four gateways in the doctrine of the three baskets<sup>42</sup> and its various explanations about the causes and conditions of spiritual transformation with metaphors that illustrate them. Within each of these gateways there are any number of further explanations and illustrations. For example:

- \* For laziness there is a teaching about the endurance of suffering.
- \* For egotism there is a teaching about the endurance of impermanence.

The four gateways in the general doctrine (common to all three vehicles)<sup>42</sup> are also like this. When dealing with the receptivity of sentient beings for sudden awakening to life's purpose, there is the distinguished doctrine (specifically for bodhisattvas) and the perfect doctrine (that seamlessly blends all the others).<sup>42</sup> Each of these has four gateways as well, and again there are many different explanations of the mutually dependent aspects that awaken sentient beings to life's purpose. For example, there were the thirty-two bodhisattvas who were each taught of a different gateway for entry into the non-dual nature of life's purpose in the ninth chapter of The Sūtra on the Teaching of the Layman 'Of Spotless Reputation' (Vimalakīrti Nirdeśa Sūtra,

維摩詰所說經), and in The Sūtra on the Great Garland of Universal Enlightenment (Mahā Vaipulya Buddha Avatamsaka Sūtra, 大方廣佛華嚴經) there were descriptions of the countless different kinds of practices found in those who have receptivity for producing virtuous spiritual capacities. This is the meaning of the passage that says **through various different explanations of the causes and conditions of awakening to life's purpose, illustrations of them that serve as metaphors and the skillful use of words and terms, there are the various teachings about it** (nyakkan innen hiyu gonji seppō, 若干譬喻言辭說法).

In saying that **this is the Buddha's work that has never ceased** (shosa butsuji mizō zanpai, 所作佛事未曾暫廢), there is a general conclusion about it being **without any falsehood** (fuko, 不虛). As before, when there was a description of the various different kinds of benefits bestowed in terms of both visible forms and voiced sounds and in terms of both the Buddha's own life and work as well as the lives and works of others, all sentient beings were made to enter into the knowledge and vision of enlightenment.<sup>25</sup> Because this is not just the lesser work of those in the heavens of meditation or the social realm of human beings, it is said that **this is the Buddha's work** (shosa butsuji, 所作佛事).

Question: If only one person was to be delivered into the transcendence of spiritual freedom (S. nirvāṇa, 滅度) and others were not to attain it, the Buddha's work would have ceased.

Having **ceased** (pai, 廢), sentient beings would no longer attain its transcendental benefits. How could one then understand that of which it is said **all of it is true and without any falsehood** (kaijitsu fuko, 皆實不虛) or even just that **all of it is true** (kai jitsu, 皆實)?

Answer: Long ago the Buddha said that 'I sat at the site where I cultivated the noble path and attained the supreme universal enlightenment but I did not yet grasp its total transcendental purpose.' The seven skillful ways & means<sup>21</sup> do not entirely extinguish all the falsehoods of illusion. Through understanding the dual (virtual) nature of spiritual freedom (nirvāṇa) there are the ways & means of the empty fist.<sup>32</sup> Just recognizing that which is false does not mean that one fully sees the transcendental reality. If long ago the Buddha bestowed these seven provisional kinds of teachings<sup>21</sup> without offering the realization of the one transcendental reality, it could be said that his teaching contained falsehoods. These falsehoods are that of which one takes leave, and there is no leaving of them without entry into the transcendental reality beyond it. Because of this, one recognizes how the transcendental realities of long ago have become falsehoods of today. This helps to explain the meaning of **all of it is true and without any falsehood** (kaijitsu fuko, 皆實不虛) and **the Buddha's work that has never ceased** (butsuji mizo zanpai, 佛事無廢).

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2. From **Like this, I have attained enlightenment and descended into this world for the very great eternal ...** (nyoze ga jōbutsu irai jindai kuon jumyō, 如是我成佛甚大久遠 ...), there is a part on this spiritual life being neither born nor extinguished and yet manifesting its extinction. This is also in two parts:
  - a. First, from **Like this, I have attained enlightenment** (nyoze ga jōbutsu, 如是我成佛 ...) there is a part on that which is neither born nor extinguished (neither arises nor perishes).
  - b. From **Through these ways & means The One Who Has Descended Into This World ...** (nyorai ize hōben, 如來以是方便 ...), there is a part on the benefits of perishing (entering into extinction - nirvāṇa).

- a. The first part, on that which neither arises nor perishes, is further divided in two parts:
  1. First, there is an explanation of the source, the original (timeless & eternal) reality (本實) of the spiritual life that does not perish.
  2. Then, from **Although I am really without death ... (nen kon hijitsu metsudo, 然今非實滅度 ...)**, there will be a part on announcing that the manifestation of the spiritual life will perish.
1. On the source, the original (timeless & eternal) reality of this spiritual life that is undying:  
This is also in two parts
  - a. From **Like this, I have already attained enlightenment and descended into this world (nyoze ga jōbutsu irai, 如是我成佛已來 ...)**, there is an explanation of the original effect, the state of enlightenment, the fruit of realizing the timeless & eternal nature of the spiritual life.
  - b. Then, beginning with **Good sons, I originally practiced the bodhisattva path ... (shozen nanshi! ga hongyō bosatsu dō, 諸善男子! 我本行菩薩道 ...)**, there will be an explanation of the original cause of this eternal life.

- a. First, on the original effect, the fruit of eternal life

如 是, 我 成 佛 已 來, 甚 大 久 遠,  
 nyo ze, ga jō butsu i rai, jin dai ku on,  
 Like this, I become Buddha already came, very great eternally long,

壽 命 無 量 阿 僧 祇 劫, 常 住 不 滅。  
 ju myō mu ryō a sō gi kō, jō jū fu metsu.  
 (lifespan) without measure (asaṃkhyeya) kalpas, ever abiding without perishing.

“Like this I have already realized enlightenment and descended into this world for a very great eternal lifespan of limitless and countless ages, forever abiding without perishing.”

**Forever abiding without perishing (jōju fumetsu, 常住不滅):** In summoning these four words, the sūtra reveals the awesome spiritual power that will always remain to benefit sentient beings in the future.

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- b. From **Good sons! I originally practiced the bodhisattva path (shozen nanshi! ga hongyō bosatsu dō, 諸善男子! 我本行菩薩道 ...)**, the sūtra brings up the original cause, the source of the (timeless and) eternal nature of this spiritual life (rather than its manifested effect).

「諸 善 男 子! 我 本 行 菩 薩 道 所 成 壽 命,  
 sho zen nan shi! ga hon gyō bo satsu dō sho jō ju myō,  
 All good (sons) I originally walked (bodhisattva) path here become life livelihood,

今 猶 未 盡, 復 倍 上 數。  
 kon yū mi jin, bu bai jō shu.  
 now still not yet finished, again double above number.

**“Good sons, I originally practiced the bodhisattva path. This has become a livelihood that still will not be completed for more than twice the number of ages described before.”**

In the past, people have relied upon extremely high numbers to verbally describe the number of ages there have been, first saying that there have been as many ages (S. kalpas, 劫)<sup>9</sup> as the number of sands along the River Ganges and then saying there have been **more than twice the number of ages described before (bubai jōshu, 復倍上數)**. All of these only describe the lifespan of this spiritual life in terms of its impermanent aspect. The transmission of this spiritual life prolongs this lifespan, but this is still only describing it in terms of that about it which is impermanent. As long as there are attachments to the words, the idea (about its greatness) being conveyed here is missed. With the sūtra here bringing up the cause rather than the effect, the effect is without any number. On this, the verse of this chapter later says:

**“Over a lifespan of countless ages**

**Ever being acquired through the cultivation of actions.”**

**(jūmyō mushu kō, ku shugō shotoku, 壽命無數劫, 久修業所得)**

This is a not just a reference to the transmission of this spiritual life prolonging its lifespan.

Question: How is this so?

Answer: When the Buddha cultivated the totally perfect cause at the very first place and time, there was already realization of the timeless and eternal source of the original spiritual life.

With this being inexhaustible and never ending, does it not already exceed twice the highest number described before of all the countless effects that have ever been manifested?

Question: In casually dismissing all of these effects constituting this enlightenment like this, is one not then just making the opposite mistake of becoming attached to the cause that is able to create them?

Answer: In just having made this cause that is (timeless &) eternal, there is going beyond that which is impermanent. This can be compared to a crown prince who has been granted an allowance that is impossible for him to ever use up. How much more is the ultimate allowance from the Blessed One impossible to ever use up? This explains the words here about this. Why should one bother to twist the words in such a way that it will in the end just keep producing doubts and mistakes?

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2. Beginning with **Although I am really without death ... (nen kon hijitsu metsudo, 然今非實滅度 ...)**, there is a part on announcing that the manifestation will perish.

然 今 非 實 滅 度, 而 便 唱 言 『 當 取 滅 度 。 』  
nen kon hi jitsu metsu do, ni ben shō gon tō shu metsu do  
In fact now not really extinguished, but (as device) declare say must (take on) extinction

**“Although I am really without death, as a device I declare that I must perish.”**

This means that the three-fold spiritual life of enlightenment (S. tri kāya, 三身)<sup>4</sup> never perishes from this world (is never extinguished) yet *it is said* that it must perish (be extinguished).

As The Sūtra on the Instructions of the Layman ‘Of Spotless Reputation’ (Vimalakīrti Nirdeśa Sūtra, 維摩詰所說經) says:



“Because life’s original (timeless) purpose is without birth (never arises in the present), it is also without extinction (and will never perish in the future).”

This is about the nature of the spiritual life (S. dharma kāya, 法身) never being extinguished. But this sūtra also speaks about ‘the meaning of nirvāṇa’, which is the declaration of its *existence* (which is essentially the same thing as ‘the announcement of its impending mortality’).

Question: What does this mean?

Answer: For those who have thoroughly penetrated the meaning of the spiritual life, the

Buddha does not need to declare that he must enter into the serenity of nirvāṇa.<sup>71</sup>

However, for those who have not, there is this declaration.

- \* When speaking about the serenity of its illumination (照寂), the Buddha was declaring the extinction of this spiritual life.
- \* When speaking about the illumination of its serenity (寂照), the Buddha was declaring the birth of this spiritual life.

In terms of this three-fold spiritual life:

1. With regards to the existential nature of the spiritual life (S. dharma kāya, 法身), although it neither arises nor perishes, it also arises and perishes:

- \* When the confused mind has attachments, there is the arising of emotional disturbances (S. kleśa, 煩惱)<sup>51</sup> and perishing of transcendental knowledge and discernment (S. jñāna prajñā, 智慧).<sup>25</sup>
- \* When the emancipated mind is untainted by affliction, there is the arising of this knowledge & discernment and the perishing of emotional disturbances.
- \* With the perishing of affliction (S. āsrava, 惑) and the arising of emancipation (S. vimokṣa, 解脫), there is the perishing of that which is impermanent.
- \* With emancipation arising & affliction<sup>51</sup> perishing, there is the transcendental serenity of nirvāṇa.

This simply explains the nature of life’s purpose in terms of its arising & perishing.

When there is no duality between confusion and understanding, there is no declaration of them arising or perishing.

2. The reward of grace descending from the spiritual life (S. saṃbhoga kāya, 報身) does not perish but it is said to perish:

- \* Who does not have transcendental knowledge and discernment as well as emotional disturbances,<sup>51</sup> and yet it is said that knowledge and discernment are able to destroy emotional disturbances. They are like the inseparable aspects of illumination and darkness. This is the meaning of the reward of grace descending from the spiritual life that never perishes.
- \* Sentient beings who hear this but do not understand it reason they have already attained enlightenment. Because of this, arrogance and complacency arise and there is no further cultivation the noble path. And so it is necessary to again speak about the noble path being able to extinguish affliction.
- \* When there are emotional disturbances, there is no transcendental knowledge and discernment. When there is this knowledge and discernment, there are no emotional disturbances. But without this knowledge and discernment how can there be the perishing of these emotional disturbances?

3. The response of a manifestation descending from the spiritual life (S. nirmāṇa kāya, 應身) does not perish but it is said to perish:

- \* The response is an application of the spiritual life & the reward of grace descending from it. With its existential nature never perishing, how can its applications have such limitations? This is the response of the spiritual life being without extinction.

- \* However, if sentient beings were to always see enlightenment (the Buddha), there would be the arising of arrogance and complacency. Because of this, the Buddha declared ‘tonight I must perish (enter into nirvāṇa)’.<sup>71</sup>

Furthermore:

1. The existential nature of the spiritual life is explained as never perishing and so being without extinction.
2. The reward of grace descending from the spiritual life is only spoken of being without extinction in terms of this existential nature of the spiritual life. Through the dialectical principle, the nature of transcendental knowledge and discernment<sup>25</sup> is able to break up and destroy afflictions. Upon reaching them, afflictions are broken up. In not reaching it, they are also broken up. In both of these together and each of these separately, there is this nature of knowledge and discernment that is able to break up and destroy afflictions. On examining the dialectical principle like this, it has a merit that is indestructible. This is the meaning of transcendental knowledge and discernment going beyond the extinction of affliction. Wherever there is this knowledge and discernment, there are no emotional disturbances. This is the nature of discernment (in the reward of grace descending from the spiritual life) that is able to extinguish afflictions.
3. The response of a manifestation of the spiritual life is explained as necessarily being without extinction in terms of the existential nature of the spiritual life and its reward of grace. With them having the nature of permanence (being timeless & eternal), the application of its response cannot be without this nature. And so, because sentient beings are inexhaustible and without end, they are said to be without extinction.

If the very existential nature of the spiritual life is said to neither arise nor perish and the reward of its grace<sup>13</sup> completely penetrates and pervades its dialectical principle so that affliction is unable to arise or perish, the response of this spiritual life will have a continuity that neither arises nor perishes.

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- b. From **By such ways & means The One Who Has Descended Into This World ... (nyorai ize hōben, 如來以是方便 ...)**, there is an explanation of the benefits of manifesting the extinction of the Buddha’ life (appearing to pass from this world). This is also in two parts:
1. First, there are the benefits for sentient beings from the manifestation of its extinction.
  2. Then, beginning with **And so The One Who Has Descended Into This World uses skillful ways & means to teach monks ...’ (zeco nyorai i hōben setsu biku, 是故如來以方便說: 比丘 ...)**, there are the benefits from *declaring* this extinction (announcing that this life must perish from the world).<sup>71</sup>

1. On the benefits of manifesting extinction, there are two parts:
  - a. Outlining the problems associated with it never perishing (being without extinction)
  - b. An elaboration on this

- a. Outlining the problems associated with it never perishing (being without extinction)

如 來 以 是 方 便, 教 化 眾 生。  
 nyo rai i ze hō ben, kyō ke shu jō.  
 Thus Come by these ways means, teach transform many living.



所以者何？若佛久住於世，薄德之人，  
 sho i sha ga? nyaku buk- ku jū o se, haku toku shi nin,  
 This because it what? If Buddha long remains in world, weak virtue 's people,

不種善根，貧窮下賤，貪著五欲，  
 fu shu zen gon, bin gu ge sen, ton jaku go yoku,  
 without seeds good roots, poor destitute low humble, greedy attached five desires,

入於憶想妄見網中。  
 nyū o oku sō mō ken mō chū.  
 enter into ideas thoughts false views net midst.

“By such ways & means, The One Who Has Descended Into This World instructs and spiritually transforms sentient beings. Why is this? When the Buddha remains too long in this world, people who are weak in virtue will be without seeds for the development of virtuous spiritual capacities. Being poor in merit, they will become greedily attached to the five kinds of sensory desire and enter into a network of mental distinctions and associations that are based on false beliefs.”

This is a problem that is the same as that previously described as ‘finding contentment in lesser purposes’ (gyō o shōbō, 樂於小法). People who see the enlightened being (Buddha) always remaining here in this world will be **without seeds for the development of virtuous spiritual capacities** (fushu zengon, bingu gesen, 不種善根、貧窮下賤).

\* In not producing the two virtuous states of mind they are without their benefits. False beliefs and intentions with misguided motivations will not be eliminated.

*The two virtuous states of mind are:*

1. Those that have not yet arisen (the potential source for good)
2. Those that already exist (manifested good)

\* In not severing the two evil states of mind, there are the problems associated with the consequences they cause (S. akuśala karma, 惡業).

*The two evils states of mind are:*

1. Those that have not yet arisen (the potential source for evil)
2. Those that already exist (manifested evil)

\* **Greedily attached to sensory desires and entering into a network of mental distinctions and associations that are based on false beliefs** (tonjaku goyoku, nyū o okusō mōken mōchū, 貪著五欲，入於憶想妄見網中):

- \* **Mental distinctions and associations** (okusō, 憶想) is a reference to the mistaken distinctions (S. vikalpa, 分別) and associations (S. samjñā, 想) that are found in false beliefs (S. kudṛṣṭi, 邪見).<sup>51</sup>
- \* **The five kinds of sensory desire** (goyoku, 五欲) refer to intentions (S. cintanā, 思) that are beset with afflicted ulterior motives.<sup>51</sup>

Because these sentient beings are heavily tainted with affliction, it is necessary for the Buddha to speak about perishing from this world (entering into extinction). If the Buddha did not do so, the two evil states of mind would arise and so not perish, and the two virtuous states of mind would be obstructed and so not arise.

When the Buddha relied on the four means of accomplishing the objective (S. catvāri siddhānta, 四悉檀)<sup>44</sup> to spiritually awaken sentient beings through the manifestation of extinction, the two evils states perished while the two virtuous states arose.

- \* To extinguish the two evil states of mind, the Buddha uses the therapeutic method of correcting their errors and healing their sicknesses (S. prati pākṣika siddhānta, 對治悉檀)<sup>44</sup> and the ultimate method of revealing the transcendental meaning (S. pāramārthika siddhānta, 第一義悉檀) found in the dialectical principle of the middle way.
  - a. The ultimate method extinguished evils that had not yet arisen.
  - b. The therapeutic method extinguished evils that had already arisen.
- \* To produce the two virtuous states of mind, the Buddha used the worldly method of adapting to the desires of sentient beings (S. laukika siddhānta, 世界悉檀)<sup>44</sup> and the inspirational method of arousing their personal capacities that were worthy and noble (S. prāti pauruṣika siddhānta, 為人悉檀).<sup>44</sup>
  - c. The worldly method produced virtuous states that had not yet arisen.
  - d. The inspirational method further developed virtuous states that had already arisen.

Further to this, when using introspective meditation on the five (afflicted) projections of one's own purpose<sup>62</sup> there is the extinguishing of evils in the sphere of desire. The worldly method of adapting to (aspirational) desires extinguishes evils that have already arisen while the therapeutic method of correcting mistakes and healing sicknesses extinguishes evils that have not yet arisen. Here:

- \* The worldly method extinguishes evils that have already arisen,
- \* The therapeutic method extinguishes evils that have not yet arisen,
- \* The inspirational method further develops the virtuous states that have already arisen &
- \* The ultimate method produces unconditionally virtuous states that have not yet arisen.

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- b. From **If they saw The One Who Has Descended Into This World always being here in this world (nyakken nyorai jōzai, 若見佛常在 ...)**, there is an elaboration on the problems that are a result of never perishing (with the spiritual life seeming to be without extinction).

若 見 如 來 常 在 不 滅, 便 起 憍 恣 而 懷 厭 怠,  
 nyak- ken nyo rai jō zai fu metsu, ben ki kyō shi ni e en dai,  
 If see Thus Come ever here not perish, means arise arrogant smug then heart tired lazy,

不 能 生 於 難 遭 之 想、 恭 敬 之 心。  
 fu nō shō o nan sō shi sō, ku gyō shi shin  
 not able bear in hard (to meet) 's thought, respect reverence 's mind

**“If they saw The One Who Has Descended Into This World always being here in this world and never perishing, it would be the means for the arising of arrogance and complacency, feelings of laziness and disinterest, and an inability to bear the thought of one who is difficult to meet with a mind of reverence.”**

- \* **If they saw The One Who Has Descended Into This World always being here in this world and never perishing, it would be the means for the arising of arrogance and complacency (nyakken nyorai jōzai fumetsu benki kyōshi, 若見佛常在, 便起憍恣):** Because of this, there are problems.

- \* **An inability to bear ... reverence (funō shō ... kugyō, 不能生 ... 恭敬):** Because of this, there are no benefits.
- \* **Arrogance and complacency (kyōshi, 憍恣):** This is affliction with pride and false beliefs.<sup>51</sup>
- \* **Laziness and disinterest (endai, 厭怠):** This is the arising of intentions beset with afflicted motivations.<sup>51</sup>
- \* **An inability to bear the thought of one who is difficult to meet (funō shō o nansō shisō, 不能生於難遭想):** This is the inability to bear a proper vision of the truth.
- \* **Without ... a mind of reverence (fu ... kugyō shishin, 不 ... )::** This is being unable to produce proper deliberation about the noble path.

For these reasons, the Buddha responds with a manifestation of extinction (S. nirvāṇa, 滅), declaring that he must perish from this world.<sup>71</sup>

When sentient beings see or hear that the three-fold spiritual life of the Buddha<sup>4</sup> never perishes (is without extinction), there is the very meaning of arrogance and complacency, as it is the means for sentient beings to reason that they are already no different from the Bodhisattva Maitreya<sup>7</sup> and are already endowed with an equanimity of mind that is completely consistent with the transcendental nature of reality. Because of this, they will bear arrogance and conceit, reasoning that, since emotional disturbances do not arise from themselves, there is no need for them to extinguish them. Why should it be necessary for them to cultivate the noble path? This is the means for them to produce feelings of idleness (pramatta, 放逸) and lack of self-restraint (pramāda, 恣情). It is for this reason that the Buddha speaks about extinction (S. nirvāṇa, 滅). Further, there are such teachings explaining the timeless, eternal nature of the spiritual life as:

“With there being sentient beings, so there are different characteristics of their spiritual awakening (S. bodhi lakṣaṇa, 煩惱相).”

“With there being the characteristics of spiritual awakening, so there are the characteristics of affliction (that they are awakened from).”

“Through illumination and darkness being inseparable aspects of one another, the spiritual awaking of the Buddha is revealed.”

Upon hearing these kinds of teachings, many sentient beings became more conceited and idle. No longer cultivating that which is virtuous, they became lazy and self-centered. For this reason, the Buddha spoke about the reward of grace descending from the spiritual life that is able to extinguish emotional disturbances. The power of ignorance is great, but the transcendental knowledge found in the Buddha’s enlightenment is able to extinguish it. The response of this spiritual life is without extinction yet, in manifesting its extinction, it becomes easier to understand. When the Buddha declared that the source of spiritual awakening neither arises nor perishes (is without birth or extinction), it was necessary to extinguish the confusion that arose from this by teaching about the serenity of extinction (S. nirvāṇa, 滅).

The sūtras say that transcendental knowledge and discernment<sup>25</sup> do not extinguish emotional disturbances (they only reveal it).<sup>51</sup> In fact, when there is illumination, there is no darkness. But if you were now perfectly endowed with emotional disturbances, how would you be capable of transcendental discernment of purpose? One should better understand that transcendental knowledge and discernment are able to extinguish the obstacles that arise from affliction. With sentient beings hearing of this declaration of (impending) nirvāṇa,<sup>71</sup> it is means for them to produce thoughts about the three-fold spiritual life of the Buddha<sup>4</sup> being difficult to encounter and so inspire a **mind of reverence (kugyō shishin, 恭敬之心)** for it.

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2. From **Therefore The One Who Has Descended Into This World uses the ways & means of teaching ...** (*zeco nyorai i hōben setsu*, 是故如來以方便說 ...), there is an explanation of the benefits from announcing impending mortality (that this life must soon perish).<sup>71</sup>

a. First the sūtra praises the idea that the Buddha's spiritual life is difficult to encounter

b. Then it explains why it is difficult to encounter

c. Then it concludes that the three aspects of this spiritual life are all hard to encounter

是故如來以方便說：『比丘當知！諸佛出世，  
ze ko nyo rai i hō ben setsu: bi ku tō chi! sho buts- shuts- se,  
This so Thus Come by ways means teaches, (Bhikṣus) must know! all Buddhas appear world,

難可值遇。』所以者何？諸薄德人，過無量  
nan ka chi gu. sho i sha ga? sho haku toku nin. ka mu ryō  
Hard may find meet. This because it what? All weak virtue people exceed without limit

百千萬億劫，或有見佛，或不見者，  
hyaku zen man ok- kō, waku u ken butsu, waku fu ken sha,  
100 1000 10000 100000 kalpas, some have seen Buddha, some not see him,

以此事故，我作是言：『諸比丘！如來難可得見。』  
i shi ji ko, ga sa ze gon: sho bi ku! nyo rai nan ka tok- ken.  
By these things so, I make these words: all (bhikṣus)! Thus Come hard may get to see.

斯眾生等聞如是語，必當生於難遭之想，  
shi shu jō tō mon nyo ze go, hi tō shō o nan zō shi sō,  
such many living who hear like these words, certain must bear in hard to meet's thought,

心懷戀慕，渴仰於佛，便種善根。  
shin e ren bo, katsu gō o butsu, ben shu zen gon.  
mind heart yearn long, thirst reverence for Buddha, means seeds good roots.

是故如來雖不實滅，而言滅度。  
ze ko nyo rai sui fu jitsu metsu, ni gon metsu do.  
This so Thus Come though not really perish, however speak of (extinction)

“And so The One Who Has Descended Into This World uses skillful ways & means to teach monks about how difficult it is to encounter a Buddha in this world. There have been so many people in this world who have been weak in virtue over so many countless hundreds, thousands, millions and billions of ages. Some of them have had a chance to encounter a Buddha but many have not. Because of this, I have always reminded them:

‘Monks (Bhikṣus), you should never forget that it is very difficult to get to see an enlightened being who has descended into this world.’”

“Sentient beings who hear these words will certainly bear in mind the idea that it is difficult to encounter such an enlightened being, and their hearts will long and thirst with reverence to see one. This is a device used for cultivating the seeds of virtuous spiritual capacities in them. Because of this, although The Ones Who Have Descended Into This World never really perish, they are said to perish from this world.”

- a. Beginning with **And so The One Who Has Descended Into This World uses skillful ways & means to teach ... it is very difficult to encounter a Buddha in this world (zeko nyorai i hōben setsu ... shobuts- shusse nanka chigu, 是故如來以方便說 ... 諸佛出世難可值遇),** the sūtra praises the idea that the Buddha that is difficult to encounter: Sentient beings who find contentment in lesser purposes have beliefs and ulterior motives that produce heavy obstacles to spiritual awakening. Upon hearing that the three-fold life of enlightenment<sup>4</sup> is without extinction (never perishes), they do not cultivate the noble path and it is difficult for them to attain an understanding of it.
- b. Next, from **Why is this so? ... (sho i shaga?, 所以者何? ...)** there is an explanation of why it is difficult to encounter. It is because there have been so many people that have been weak in virtue over countless hundreds, thousands, millions and billions of ages. Some of them have encountered a Buddha and some of them have not (sho haku toku ninka muryō hyaku zenman ok-kō, waku u kenbutsu waku fuken sha, 諸薄德人過百千劫, 或有見佛或不見者).
- c. Then, from **Sentient beings who hear these words will certainly bear in mind the idea that it is difficult to encounter The One Who Has Descended Into This World ... (shi shujō tō mon nyoze go, hi tō shō o nanzō shisō, 斯眾生等聞如是語, 必當生於難遭之想)** it concludes on these three aspects of the Buddha's spiritual life all being difficult to encounter:
- \* If people see (have a transcendental vision of) the three-fold spiritual life of the Buddha, they will have much virtue and little evil. For them, there will not be a teaching about the Buddha perishing. As later described in the verse of this chapter, these people will see **'the Buddha always here on Vulture's Peak' (jō zai ryōjusan, 常在靈鷲山).**<sup>19</sup>
  - \* Some will not see the Buddha. These people have heavy obstacles and their virtue is weak. For them it is taught that this three-fold spiritual life is difficult to encounter. Sentient beings who hear this will then think that, although the three-fold spiritual life of the Buddha neither arises nor perishes, it will certainly be necessary to produce virtue and extinguish affliction to get to see this spiritual life. Since this work will not be easy, it is said to be **difficult to encounter (nansō, 難遭).**
  - \* **Their hearts will long and thirst with reverence (shin e renbo katsu gō, 心懷戀慕渴仰):** This explains that through the manifestation of extinction there are no longer the problems that were caused by arrogance and complacency. Through the extinction of false beliefs and ulterior motives that are beset with afflictions, sentient beings are said to be 'without these problems'. In being endowed with **the seeds of virtuous spiritual capacities (shu zengon, 種善根),** they are are said to have these benefits.

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- b. From **And good sons! ... (u zen nanshi!, 又善男子 ...),** there is the second and final step of the main teaching in the prose of this chapter. This is the general conclusion, on the benefits of the past, present and future being without any falsehood.

「又 善 男 子! 諸 佛 如 來, 法 皆 如 是,  
u zen nan shi! sho butsu nyo rai, hō kai nyo ze,  
And good (sons)! All Buddhas Thus Come, purpose everywhere like this,

為 度 眾 生, 皆 實 不 虛。  
i do shu jō, kai jitsu fu ko.  
to deliver many living everywhere true not false.

**“And good sons, all of the purposes of the Enlightened Beings Who Have Descended Into This World are like this. Designed to deliver sentient beings, they are all true and without any falsehood.”**

This also has three parts:

1. First there are three lines saying **And good sons, all of the purposes of the Enlightened Beings Who Have Descended Into This World are like this (uzen nanshi, shobutsu nyorai, hōkai nyoze, 又善男子! 諸佛如來, 法皆如是)** clarifying that all the Buddhas have arisen from the five kinds of corruption (S. pañca kasāyāh, 五濁).<sup>61</sup>
  - \* First there was the opening up of the three vehicles<sup>52</sup> and later there was the revealing of the one vehicle.
  - \* First there was opening up of the manifestation of enlightenment that is immediate (here & now) and later there was the revealing of the source of enlightenment that is distant (timeless & eternal).
2. Next, there is one line clarifying that they are all **designed to deliver sentient beings (i do shujō, 為度眾生).**
3. Finally, there is one line clarifying that **they are all true and without any falsehood (kai jitsu fu ko, 皆實不虛).**

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# **The commentary on this sixteenth chapter from Zhìyǐ's 'Words & Passages of The Lotus Sūtra'**

*C. Fahuá Wénjù, J. Hokke Mongu, 法華文句*

## **Part #3 - An explanation of the chapter's text**

*Section B - The prose illustrating the main teaching  
through the parable of the good doctor*

## Part #2 - An explanation of the chapter's text; Section B - The illustration of the main teaching

2. Beginning with **This can be compared to a good doctor ... (hinyo rō i, 譬如良醫 ... )**, there is **the illustration**. This is in two main parts.
  - a. First there is the opening up of the parable about the good doctor healing the children.
  - b. Then there is the drawing of conclusions about this parable.
- a. **The opening up of the illustration** is in two parts:
  1. *The parable of the good doctor healing the children*; this illustrates the part previously described as the opportunities to benefit sentient beings in the past, present and future by responding to spiritually transform them.
  2. *Explaining how the doctor's different means of teaching are all valid*, illustrating that before about the benefits of the past, present & future all being without any falsehood. The words on the future in the previous section on the teaching were few. In this illustration there are more.
1. First, on *the illustration of the good doctor healing the children*, there are three parts:
  - a. The doctor who has gone far away  
This illustrates the benefits from the past.
  - b. The doctor returns, and then goes away again  
This illustrates responding to spiritually transform sentient beings in the present.
  - c. The doctor later seeks a means to return  
This illustrates responding by spiritually transforming them in the future.
- a. The doctor who has gone far away, illustrating the benefits from the past:  
Before, the words about the benefits in the past were in two parts:
  1. Discarding the immediate teaching (about the Buddha while in this world) and revealing the distant teaching (about the Buddha that is timeless & eternal)
  2. Explaining past opportunities to respond by spiritually transforming sentient beings.Now, with regards to responding with benefits from the past, there is an illustration of past opportunities for the Buddha to have sympathy for the potential capacities of sentient beings and respond by spiritually transforming them.

Before, this part on the opportunities for benefits in the past was in three parts:

- a. The place where there have been benefits
  - b. Clearing away doubts about the manifestations of the Buddha's spiritual life
  - c. Sympathy and response in the spiritual transformation of sentient beings
- Now, in the illustration, there is only one of these parts, on sympathy and response in the spiritual transformation of sentient beings. This is in two parts:
- a. Sympathy for the receptivities (potential capacities) of sentient beings
  - b. Responding to spiritually transform them

In illustrating this:

- a. **This can be compared to a good doctor (hinyo rō i, 如有良醫)** is a reference to the dual (provisional & transcendental) knowledge of the Buddha, the sympathy that is able to respond to sentient beings. This is like that described before as **with my enlightened eye I have observed (ga i butsugen kan, 我以佛眼, 觀)**.

- b. From **many children ... (tasho shisoku, 多諸子息 ...)**, there is a part on sentient beings who are receptive to this response. Before this was described as **when sentient beings have come and reached me here (nyaku u shujō raishi gasho, 若有眾生來至我所)**.

Before, the part on opportunities to respond by spiritually transforming sentient beings, there were two parts:

1. Responding with benefits through visible forms and voiced sounds<sup>43</sup>
2. Responding with benefits through joy and contentment.

Now, in the illustration, these benefits will only be indicated generally.

Before, there were two parts on these benefits:

1. Being without birth (not arising in this world) yet manifesting their birth (arising)
2. Being without extinction (not perishing) yet manifesting their extinction (appearing to perish from this world).

Now, in the illustration, there will only be a part on manifesting their extinction.

- a. Sympathy and response in the spiritual transformation of sentient beings (in the past)

譬	如	良	醫,	智	慧	聰	達,
hi	nyo	rō	i	chi	e	sō	datsu,
Compare	like	good	doctor,	knowledge	vision	quick	reach,

  

明	練	方	藥,	善	治	眾	病。
myō	ren	hō	yaku,	zen	shi	shu	byō.
brilliant	trained	ways	medicine,	skilled	healing	many	diseases.

**“This can be compared to a good doctor with penetrating knowledge and discernment who was brilliantly trained in the ways of medicine and skilled in healing all diseases.”**

First, on **the good doctor (ro i, 良醫)**, we will illustrate ten kinds of doctors:

1. The first kind of healer treats various diseases, but they just increase without abatement, sometimes to the point of death. This is comparable to those who only teach about the outer appearances of the noble path and false (nihilistic) beliefs about the nature of emptiness (空見外道). With selfish conduct and evil intent, they instruct people with falsehoods and sever their capacities for virtue. The spiritual life is forsaken and the livelihood of acquiring transcendental discernment dies off.
2. The second kind of healer treats diseases, but they neither increase nor decrease. This is comparable to those who teach false beliefs about ascetic practices (有見苦行外道) that are like jumping from cliffs and walking through fire. These ascetic practices do not help one to attain meditative resolve and they are unable to sever attachments. Because of this, they do not decrease diseases. Because they do not sever virtuous spiritual capacities, they also do not increase them.
3. The third kind of healer treats diseases, decreasing them without increasing them, but it is only the healing practice of a worldly, materialistic doctor. Having cured one disease, others kinds will arise in its place. This is comparable to those who teach superficial methods of cultivating meditative resolve merely to sever attachments (修定斷結外道).

4. The fourth kind of healer is also able to cure diseases so that they do not arise again, yet they are unable to heal all diseases. This is comparable to those who only teach how to be on the two lesser vehicles of spiritual awakening focused on the individual level of attainment (as students of life's purpose and those only awakened to the afflicted nature of sentient existence in their own lives). These teachers are able to prevent one or two kinds of conditions, but they are unable to heal all diseases everywhere.
5. The fifth kind of healer is able to concurrently cure many diseases but is without a skillful technique, using pain and suffering in the healing of diseases. In the Commentary on the Longer Version of The Sūtra on the Deliverance of Transcendental Discernment,<sup>26</sup> this healer is known as a 'clumsy deliverer'. This is comparable to bodhisattvas who teach about the six kinds of deliverance in terms of the doctrine of the three baskets (六度菩薩),<sup>42</sup> spreading their healing with merciful and compassionate intentions (but unskillful techniques).
6. The sixth kind of healer is wonderfully resourceful and cures diseases without causing pain or distress. However, this doctor cannot heal people who face certain death. This is comparable to bodhisattvas who teach about the existential nature of life's purpose in terms of the general doctrine (common to all those on the three vehicles<sup>52</sup>) (通教菩薩). Those healed can revert back to the ordinary life found in the six spheres of desire but it is not the impatient kind of healing found in those on the two lesser vehicles.
7. Although the seventh kind of doctor is able to cure all sentient beings of the most difficult diseases, they are not able to heal all their diseases simultaneously. This is comparable to bodhisattvas who teach the distinguished doctrine (all the stages that are) specific to the bodhisattva path (別教菩薩).
8. The eighth kind of healer is able to simultaneously cure all diseases everywhere but is unable to return all of these diseases to their very source. This is comparable to bodhisattvas who are first blessed with the ten attitudes of faith that are found in the perfect doctrine (圓教初心十信).<sup>70</sup>
9. The ninth kind of healer is able to simultaneously cure all diseases everywhere and return them all to their very source. However, this healer is unable to make them all go beyond their source. This is comparable to bodhisattvas who have realized the final level of the perfect doctrine (圓教後心).
10. The tenth kind of healer simultaneously cures all diseases everywhere equally and is able to make them all go beyond their source. This is comparable to The One Who Has Descended Into This World (S. Tathāgata, 如來).<sup>6</sup>

The Sūtra on the Ultimately Great Freedom (Mahā Parinirvāṇa Sūtra, 大般涅槃經) described different kinds of doctors. The first three kinds of doctors described above are likened to 'doctors of long ago who used milk as a medicine for all sicknesses' while the latter seven are likened to 'doctors who were more seasoned, experienced and well-versed in effective treatments and prescriptions'. Of these seven latter kinds of doctors:

- \* Those with less skill only used impermanence, suffering and the like to heal. They used medicines that were sour like vinegar.
- \* Those with more skill and had traveled far and wide learned of effective medicines that were again like the taking of milk.<sup>14</sup>
- \* The very last one is the most qualified and is therefore called the **good doctor** (ro i, 良醫).

In describing this good doctor:

- \* **Good (ro, 良)** here refers to being skillful and effective, with a sublime grasp of the nature of medicine that is found in eight kinds of skill (八術). These eight include:

1-3. The three kinds of penetration (三達) that recognize the connections between actions (karmas, 業) and their consequences through the (#1) past, (#2) present & (#3) future  
 4-8. The vision from the five kinds of eyes (五眼).<sup>25</sup>

- \* **Skilled in healing (zenshi, 善治):** In being aware of the source of all diseases, the good doctor is able to skillfully apply the appropriate medicines.
- \* **Knowledge and discernment (chi e, 智慧):**<sup>25</sup> This is a reference to the deep understanding that arises from the dual (provisional & transcendental) knowledge of the Buddha.
- \* **Penetrating (sōdatsu, 聰達):** There is a reference to the five kinds of eyes<sup>25</sup> with penetrating vision that are each like a mirror, ever revealing the gradual and sudden opportunities for spiritually transforming sentient beings with equanimity of mind.
- \* **Brilliantly trained in the ways of medicine (myōren hōyaku, 明鍊方藥):** This is a reference to the twelve narrative styles<sup>38</sup> of the teachings found in the scriptures, the written principles that are very deep.
- \* **Skilled in healing all diseases (zenshi shubyō, 善治眾病):** This is a reference to the doctor healing the diseases of all sentient beings by depending on the four different means of accomplishing the objective (S. catvāri siddhānta, 四悉檀).<sup>44</sup>
- \* The Sūtra on Infinite Meanings (Ananta Nirdeśa Sūtra, 無量義經) speaks of ‘the king of doctors’ and ‘the great king of doctors’. This great king of doctors is just another name for **the good doctor (rō i, 良醫)**.

b. On those who have had receptivity for this spiritual transformation

其 人 多 諸 子 息, 若 十 二 十 乃 至 百 數,  
 go nin ta sho shi soku, nyaku jū ni jū nai shi hyaku shu,  
 This person many many children progeny, perhaps 10 (20) up to 100 number,

“This person had many children; ten, twenty, up to a hundred in number.”

**This person had many children (gonin tasho shisoku, 其人多諸子息):**

- \* **Ten (jū, 十)** here is a reference to students of life’s purpose (S. śrāvakas, 聲聞).
- \* **Twenty (nijū, 二十)** refers to those awakened to the afflicted nature of sentient existence in their own lives (S. pratyeka buddhas, 支佛).
- \* **Up to a hundred in number (naishi hyakushu, 乃至百數)** refers to bodhisattvas (菩薩). The one hundred children who are bodhisattvas can generally be understood three ways:<sup>40</sup>
  1. **In terms of the direct cause of enlightenment** (S. samyak hetu, 正因佛性), all sentient beings are innately endowed with the three virtues of enlightenment (三種性德)<sup>22</sup> and are said to be ‘the Buddha’s children’. Because of this, chapter three of this sūtra On the Parable of the Burning House says “All the sentient beings in this house are my children” while this chapter says that this doctor has **many children (tasho shisoku, 多諸子息)**. In terms of the mutually dependent states found in the mind (S. daśa caitasika dharma, 十心數法)<sup>82</sup> that are awakened, there are **one hundred in number (nyakushu, 百數)**.
    - a. The master (lord, or ‘owner’) of the mind (S. cintā rāja, 心王) (the sublime purpose of life itself) is the direct cause of the enlightened nature (S. samyak hetu, 正因佛性).<sup>40</sup>
    - b. Transcendental discernment (prajñā, 慧) of this purpose is the revealing cause of the enlightened nature (S. jñāpaka hetu, 了因佛性).<sup>40</sup>
    - c. The other nine mutually dependent aspects of life’s purposes that support the

arising of this transcendental discernment (餘九相扶起) are collectively called the conditional cause of the enlightened nature (S. pratyaya hetu, 緣因佛性).<sup>40</sup>

As each of these aspects arise, the other nine kinds arise to support it. Like this, there are one hundred aspects that are realized. These innate virtues are called the Buddha's children. They go beyond good and evil, yet they also pervade both good and evil. When these ten qualities arise in one with faith, the master of the mind pervades all of these different conditions and the three causes of the enlightened nature become the innate virtues that are found within all sentient beings. As such, they all become the direct cause of the enlightened nature.

2. In terms of the conditional cause of enlightened nature (S. pratyaya hetu, 緣因佛性): Those who have formed karmic connections with enlightenment (in the past) are also called the Buddha's children, like the sixteen princes who repeated the lessons of the Buddha in chapter seven of The Lotus Sūtra.<sup>78</sup>
  - a. When they heard about life's purpose, they also bore a little understanding of it. This was attaining the revealing cause of the enlightened nature.
  - b. In the past they were able to cultivate a little of the practice, This was the conditional cause of the enlightened nature.
  - c. The original (source of this) purpose was the direct cause of the enlightened nature. With these three collectively being part of the conditional cause of the enlightened nature, there are the provisions that help inspire understanding of its one transcendental nature. And so, through the conditional cause of the enlightened nature, there are the karmic connections that have been formed with it in the past. This is the conditional causes of enlightenment being the Buddha's children, the thirty children found in the burning house, as described in chapter three of The Lotus Sūtra. When understanding this in terms of the ten attitudes of faith (daśa śraddhānāni, 十信),<sup>70</sup> with each of these attitudes of faith arising, there is endowment with the other nine and, through their mutual endowment, there are the one hundred attitudes of faith. And so there are the Buddha's children who have formed the karmic connections (conditions) for enlightenment.
3. In terms of the revealing cause of enlightenment (jñāpaka hetu, 了因佛性). This is a reference to those who hear this sūtra now. As said in chapter three of The Lotus Sūtra, "Securely abiding in this transcendental knowledge, I (now know that I) will definitely attain enlightenment".  
As expressed in chapter ten:  
"When students of life's purpose now hear this king of the sūtras, it brings them a resolve of purpose."  
On this, chapter three also says:  
"Having now been reborn from the mouth of the Buddha and become an heir to the Buddha's purpose, I am truly a child of the Buddha."  
This is also being endowed with the three causes of the enlightened nature. Having now acquired a perfect vision of the enlightened nature, there are said to be the children who are the revealing cause of enlightenment.

\* With there being a **hundred in number (hyakushu, 乃至百數)**, it is said that the ten mental states (S. daśa caitasika dharmah, 十心數法) are pervaded with the ten kinds of virtuous conduct (S. daśa kuśalāḥ karmapathāḥ, 十善業道),<sup>8</sup> and the ten attitudes of faith (daśa śraddhānāni, 十信)<sup>70</sup> are pervaded with first of the ten abodes of mindfulness on the bodhisattva's sense of purpose (S. daśa bodhisattva dharma upasthānāni, 十菩薩法住).



Because of this, the direct cause of enlightened nature is said to pervade all of them from beginning to end. These words explain that there may be the one hundred children even if there are no children who have yet fully grasped the revealing cause. The children who have realized the revealing cause are later described in this parable as those who have not forgotten the purpose for their lives and have taken the medicine.

2. On the manifestation of this spiritual life having perishing in the past:

以 有 事 緣, 遠 至 餘 國。  
i u ji en, on shi yo koku.  
by have work conditions, far go another nation.

“Because of conditions related to his work, he went far away to another nation.”

- \* This illustrates responding by spiritually transforming sentient beings in the past through the manifestation of extinction (perishing from this world and entering into one of the pure lands in the ten directions).<sup>10</sup>

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- b. From **Later on, his children swallowed someone else’s poisonous medicine, ... (shoshi ogo on ta doku yaku, 諸子於後, 飲他毒藥 ...)**, there is a part on the Buddha returning and then leaving again, illustrating that before explaining the manifestation of benefits in the present. This is also in two parts:

1. Beginning with **Later on, his children swallowed someone else’s poisonous medicine, (shoshi ogo on ta doku yaku, 諸子於後, 飲他毒藥 ...)**, there is an illustration of the response of the spiritual life to sentient beings who have obstacles in their receptivity to it. This is the same as that described before as **seeing sentient beings find contentment in lesser purposes, heavily tainted with afflictions and weak in virtue (kensho shujō gyō o shōbō, toku hak-ku jūsha, 見諸眾生, 樂於小法, 德薄垢重者).**
2. Beginning with **By the time their father returned home ... (zeji gōbu genrai kike, 是時其父還來歸家 ...)**, there is an illustration of responding by spiritually transforming sentient beings.

1. On the obstacles to receptivity in sentient beings (for which the Buddha has sympathy)

諸 子 於 後, 飲 他 毒 藥,  
sho shi o go, on ta doku yaku,  
All children during later, ate other poison medicine,  
  
藥 發 悶 亂, 宛 轉 于 地。  
yaku hotsu mon ran, en den u ji.  
medicine brings agony disorder, twist turn on ground.

“Later on, his children swallowed someone else’s poisonous medicine, which brought on agony, disorder and writhing on the ground.”

After the Buddha perished from this world, sentient beings found contentment in attachments to the three-fold sphere<sup>60</sup> of sentient existence and the beliefs of false teachers. Because of this, it is said they **swallowed someone else's poisonous medicine (onta doku yaku, 飲他毒藥)**. This was said to occur while the Buddha was traveling to and visiting other nations. With the wheel of life's purpose turning,<sup>56</sup> these children fell into attachments to the three-fold sphere of sentient existence and so they were said to be **writhing on the ground (enden uji, 宛轉于地)**.

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## 2. Responding with a manifestation that spiritually transforms sentient beings

Beginning with **By the time their father returned home (zeji gobu genrai ki ke, 是時其父還來歸家 ...)**, there is an illustration of that earlier described as **I left home when young and then attained the supreme universal enlightenment (gashō shukke toku anokutara sanmyaku sanbodai, 我少出家，得阿耨多羅三藐三菩提)**.

This is in two main parts:

- a. Not being born in this world yet appearing to do so.
  - b. Not perishing from this world yet appearing to do so.
- a. The part on not being born yet being manifested as born is further divided in two parts:
    1. The benefits of visible form and voiced sounds
    2. These manifestations are without any falsehoods
  1. The benefits of visible form and voiced sounds

Before, in the explanation, there was a description of the two benefits of visible forms and voiced sounds<sup>43</sup> as well as a part on the benefits being without any falsehood.

    - a. Now, in the parable, when the sūtra speaks about all the children having eaten poison, first there is an illustration of the benefits of visible form.<sup>43</sup>

是 時 其 父 還 來 歸 家， 諸 子 飲 毒，  
ze ji go bu gen rai ki ke, sho shi on doku,  
This time their father returned came back home, all children ate poison,

或 失 本 心、 或 不 失 者， 遙 見 其 父， 皆 大 歡 喜，  
waku shitsu hon shin, waku fu shitsu-sha, yō ken go bu, kai dai kan gi,  
some lose original mind, some not lose it, far see their father, all great elation joy,

拜 跪 問 訊：【善 安 隱 歸。 我 等 愚 癡， 誤 服 毒 藥，  
hai ki mon jin: zen an on ki. ga tō gu chi, go buku doku yaku,  
bow kneel ask pray: Good (safely) return. We who (foolish), mistaken eat poison medicine,

願 見 救 療， 更 賜 壽 命。】  
gan ken ku ryō, kyō shi ju myō.  
Please see rescue heal, again restore lifespan livelihood.

“By the time the father returned back home, all of his children had eaten the poison. Some had forgotten the purpose for their own lives while others had not. From far away they saw their father coming and they all greatly rejoiced. Bowing and kneeling, they made a request, saying:

**‘How good it is that you have safely returned. We have foolishly eaten poisonous medicine. We pray that you will see us, save us and restore our lives.’**

- \* Faithful acceptance of the beliefs of false teachers is **having eaten poison (ondoku, 飲毒)**.
- \* **Forgotten the purpose for their own lives (shitsu honshin, 失本心)** refers to having neither a great nor even a small receptivity (S. āśaya, 機感) to this spiritual life of the Buddha while **having not forgotten it (fu shits-sha, 不失者)** refers to having a receptivity for it that may be great or small. And **forgotten the purpose for their own lives** also refers to those greedily attached to the three-fold sphere of sentient existence.<sup>60</sup> People who are like this have lost the seeds that lead to development of the virtuous spiritual capacities found in the three vehicles of spiritual awakening.<sup>52</sup> Although (the Buddha’s) spiritual life is really undying (does not perish from this world), for these people the Buddha declares his mortality (and appears to perish from it).<sup>71</sup> And although those who **have not forgotten it** have attachments to the objects of the five sensory desires, they have not lost their capacities for the virtues found in the three vehicles.<sup>52</sup> Although the spiritual life of the Buddha has not really been born in this world, for these people the Buddha appears to be born in it.
  - \* With virtues strong and evils light, people see the Buddha arise (be born in this world), and they are able to cultivate the noble path and become free from attachments. This is likened to the children who see their father, seek the medicine and are cured.
  - \* With virtues weak and evil heavy, they see the Buddha and seek protection but cannot cultivate the noble path. This is like the children who see their father and seek his help but do not take the medicine. For them, their father announces his impending mortality.
- \* **From far away they saw (yō ken, 遙見):** This is about the time when the Buddha appears in this world and sentient beings see his physical life but their false beliefs and afflicted motives prevent them from seeing the five projections of the Buddha’s spiritual life (S. asamasama pañca skandha, 五分法身).<sup>62</sup> Because of this, they do not attain an intimate connection and are said to be **far away (yō, 遙)** from it.
- \* Upon seeing and hearing the Buddha, everywhere there are the phenomena of joy and reverence. The revelation of the sūtra’s words and the summoning of divine prayers through the mastery of holy words (S. brahmā rāja, J. bontennō, 梵天王) are examples of terms used in the seeking out of **salvation and restoration (kuryō, 救療)**.

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2. From **the father saw his children in suffering & distress like this ... (buken shitō kunō nyoze, 父見子等苦惱如是 ...)**, there is an illustration of that described before as the voiced benefits.<sup>43</sup> This is also in two parts:
  - a. First, from **The father saw his children in suffering and distress like this ... (buken shitō kunō nyoze ..., 父見子等苦惱如是 ...)** there is an illustration of the Buddha sympathy (having received a request) and response of teaching (or ‘turning the wheel’) of life’s purpose<sup>56</sup> and the truth about its dual (afflicted) nature.
  - b. From **He then spoke these words ..., nisa zegon ..., 而作是言 ...)**, there is an illustration of the Buddha’s admonition against evil and encouragement of virtue.

- a. The Buddha, having received a request to teach, then turned the wheel of life’s purpose.<sup>56</sup>

父 見 子 等 苦 惱 如 是, 依 諸 經 方,  
 bu ken shi tō ku nō nyo ze, e sho kyō bō,  
 Father sees children who suffer distress like this, rely all scriptures directions,

求 好 藥 草, 色 香 美 味 皆 悉 具 足,  
 gu kō yaku sō, shiki kō mi mi, kai shitsu gu soku,  
 seek good medicine herbs, color fragrance fine taste, all completely possess perfectly,

擣 篩 和 合, 與 子 令 服,  
 tō shi wa gō, yo shi ryō buku,  
 pound sift blend together, give children order eat,

“The father saw his children in suffering and distress like this. Relying on the directions of the scriptures, he sought out the most effective medicinal herbs that were endowed with a beautiful color, a fine fragrance, a pleasing taste and were perfect in every way. Upon pounding, sifting and blending them, he gave this medicine to his children and directed them to take it, ...”

- \* **The directions of the scriptures (kyōbō, 經方):** This is a reference to the teachings about life’s purpose in twelve narrative styles (S. dvādaśāṅga dharma pravacana, 十二部經).<sup>38</sup>
- \* **The most effective medicinal herbs (kō yakusō, 好藥草):** This refers to the 80,000 gateways of meditation that penetrate the true nature of life’s purpose (S. dharma paryaya, 法門).<sup>72</sup> The Buddha taught through the twelve narrative styles of the sūtras and then entered into the ultimate spiritual freedom (S. parinirvāṇa, 般涅槃). These were the medicines that were either gradually or suddenly realized.
- \* When the twelve narrative styles of the sūtras all arose from the Buddha simultaneously, there was the appearance of the sudden medicine.
- \* When they arose from the Buddha sequentially, there were the gradual medicines.

*In terms of their gradual or sudden realization:*

- \* **Beautiful color (shiki, 色)** illustrates moral commitment (S. śīla, 戒). The precepts of moral commitment protect the body and the mouth and clearly reveal their conduct.
- \* **Fine fragrance (kō, 香)** illustrates mental resolve (S. samādhi, 定). The fragrance of its benefits perfumes (pervades) all.
- \* **Pleasing taste (mimi, 美味)** illustrates transcendental discernment of purpose (S. prajñā, 慧). With it, one can acquire the flavor<sup>74</sup> of the dialectical principle and the transcendental meaning found in the mutually dependent aspects of all of life’s purposes.<sup>3</sup>

These three, moral commitment, mental resolve and transcendental discernment of purpose, are the essence of the eight-fold noble path (ārya mārga, 聖道).<sup>72</sup> Upon cultivating it, one will be able to attain a transcendental vision (S. darśana, 見) of the nature of enlightenment.

*And in terms of the timeless three virtues (S. tri guṇa, 三德)<sup>22</sup> found in the greatness of spiritual freedom:*

- \* **Beautiful color (shiki, 色)** is said to refer to the transcendental discernment of life’s purpose (S. prajñā, 般若), the color that illuminates its mutually dependent aspects when the nature of the awakened mind is unobstructed.
- \* **Fine fragrance (kō, 香)** is said to refer to emancipation (S. vimokṣa, 解脫), the virtue that is free from the smell (of affliction).
- \* **Pleasing taste (mimi, 美味)** is said to refer to the existential nature of the spiritual life (S. dharma kāya, 法身), that which has the flavor of the dialectical principle.

With these three being neither horizontal nor vertical (in relation to one another) they are called the inner treasury of the secret mystery. Relying on the doctrine, one cultivates one's practice and attains entry into this treasury.

In the teaching about the three gateways of meditation:<sup>64</sup>

- \* The power from meditation on the nature of emptiness (S. śūnyatā samādhi, 空三昧) is likened to **pounding (tō, 擣)**.
- \* The power from meditation that transcends any mutually dependent aspects (S. animitta samādhi, 無相三昧) is likened to **sifting (shi, 篩)**, and
- \* The power from meditation that is perfectly seamless, spontaneous and is without need for any further self-consciously driven motivation (S. anabhisamṣkāra samādhi, 無作三昧) is likened to **blending (wagō, 如合)**.

Each of these meditation (S. samādhis, 三昧) is endowed with moral commitment, mental resolve & transcendental discernment of purpose.

And further, in terms of the three-fold observation of the single mind (一心三觀):<sup>32</sup>

- \* The meditation on the nature of emptiness (śūnyatā, 空) is like **pounding (to, 擣)**,
- \* The meditation on the virtual nature of temporary mental constructs (prajñapti, 假) is like **sifting (shi, 篩)**, and
- \* The meditation on the dialectical principle of the middle way (madhyamā pratipad, 中道) is like **blending (wago, 如合)**.

This three-fold observation is inseparable from moral commitment, mental resolve and transcendental discernment of life's purpose. This observation of life's purpose is bestowed upon sentient beings gradually and suddenly, and so they are given directions to cultivate their practice. This is called **directing them take it (ryo buku, 令服)**.

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#### b. *Encouragement and admonition*

而	作	是	言:	【此	大	良	藥,	色	香	美	味,
ni	sa	ze	gon:	shi	dai	rō	yaku,	shiki	kō	mi	mi,
then	made	these	words:	This	very	good	medicine,	color	fragrance	fine	taste,

皆	悉	具	足,	汝	等	可	服,
kai	shitsu	gu	soku,	nyo	tō	ka	buku,
all	completely	have	perfectly,	you	who	may	take it,

速	除	苦	惱,	無	復	眾	患。】
soku	jo	ku	nō,	mu	bu	shu	gen.
quickly	rid	suffering	distress,	not	again	any	sickness.

“... making these words:

‘This very effective medicine with a beautiful color, a fine fragrance and a pleasing taste is perfect in every way. You who are willing to take it will quickly eliminate all suffering and distress and there will be no more sickness.’”

1. From **making these words (nisa zegon, 而作是言)** to **you who are willing to take it (nyotō kabuku, 汝等可服)**, there is the gateway of encouragement to do that which is virtuous.
2. The part on it **will quickly eliminate all suffering and distress and there will be no more sickness (sokuju kunō mubu shugen, 速除苦惱, 無復眾患)**: This is the gateway of admonition against evil.

Through these two gateways of encouragement and admonition, the Buddha directs sentient beings take the medicine of life's true purpose.

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3. From **Those children who had not forgotten the purpose for their own lives ... (go shoshi chū fu shitshin sha, 諸子中不失心者, ...)**, there is an illustration of that described before as the benefits attained that are without any falsehood.

Before, this was in two parts:

- a. That which is without any falsehood
- b. Explaining why it is without falsehood

Now, in the illustration, the sūtra just says that these children who have not forgotten the purpose for their lives **took the medicine and their sickness was cured (sokuben buku shi, byōjin joyu, 即便服之, 病盡除愈)**. This illustrates that described before as **all of it is true and without any falsehood (kaijitsu fuko, 皆實不虛)** but doesn't go into why it is not false.

其 諸 子 中 不 失 心 者, 見 此 良 藥、  
go sho shi chū fu shits- shin sha, ken shi rō yaku,  
These many children among not losing mind who, see this good medicine,

色 香 俱 好, 即 便 服 之, 病 盡 除 愈。  
shiki kō gu kō, soku ben buku shi, byō jin jo yu.  
color fragrance both fine, upon by taking of this, disease end eliminated cured.

**“Those children who had not forgotten the purpose for their own lives saw this good medicine with its beautiful color and fine fragrance and, upon taking it, their sickness was completely cured.”**

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- b. From **Others who had forgotten their purpose (yo shits-shin sha, 餘失心者 ...)**, there is an illustration of that described before as being without extinction and yet manifesting extinction. As before, this will be in two parts:
  1. Not long from now the Buddha will respond to these sentient beings by dying. This illustrates that which was described before as being without extinction and yet manifesting extinction (not perishing from this world, yet appearing to perish).
  2. **All the children were awakened (shinzui shōgo, 心遂醒悟)**. This illustrates that previously described as the benefits from the announcement of mortality (that the spiritual life will soon perish from this world).<sup>71</sup>
1. Responding to sentient beings by announcing impending mortality is in two parts:
  - a. The reason for it
  - b. The announcement itself



a. The reason for announcing impending mortality:<sup>71</sup>

餘 失 心 者， 見 其 父 來， 雖 亦 歡 喜 問 訊，  
yo shits- shin sha, ken go bu rai, sui yak- kan gi mon shin,  
Others lost mind those, see their father come, though also elated joyful ask request,

求 索 治 病， 然 與 其 藥 而 不 肯 服。 所 以 者 何？  
gu shaku shi byō, nen yo go yaku ni fu kō buku. Sho i sha ga?  
seek help heal disease, even give them medicine but not willing to take. This by it what?

毒 氣 深 入， 失 本 心 故， 於 此 好 色 香 藥  
dok- ke jin nyū, ship- pon shin ko, o shi kō shiki kō yaku  
Poison vapor deeply enter, lose own mind so, in this fine color fragrance medicine

而 謂 不 美。 父 作 是 念： 『此 子 可 愍，  
ni i fu mi. bu sa ze nen: shi shi ka min,  
Then reason not tasty. Father makes this thought: These children must pity,

為 毒 所 中， 心 皆 顛 倒。 雖 見 我 喜，  
i doku sho chū, shin kai ten dō. sui ken ga ki  
as poison here inside, mind everywhere upset pervert. though see me rejoice,

求 索 救 療； 如 是 好 藥 而 不 肯 服。  
gu shak- kyu ryō: nyo ze kō yaku ni fu kō buku.  
seek help rescue cure: like this good medicine however not willing to take.

“Others who had forgotten their own purpose also saw their father come. Although they rejoiced, sought help in the healing of their sickness and were even given the medicine, they were unwilling to take it. This is because the poison’s vapors had deeply entered into their minds and they had lost their way. Because of this, they reasoned that this medicine of beautiful color and fine fragrance did not taste good. Their father then made this thought:

‘I must pity these children. Their minds are all upset and confused because of this poison. Although they see me, rejoice and seek help in being cured, they are not willing to take a good medicine such as this.’”

The reason for announcing this impending mortality is because the children will not take the medicine. This illustrates that which was previously described as “If they saw The One Who Has Descended Into This World always being here in this world and never perishing, it would be the means for the arising of arrogance, complacency and feelings of laziness and disinterest” (nyakken nyorai jōzai fumetsu, benki kyōshi ni e endai, 若見如來常在不滅，便起憍恣而懷厭怠.).

Before, the teaching about the manifestation of extinction (mortality) was in two parts:

\* The original (timeless, eternal) reality of the spiritual life is without extinction.

\* This spiritual life is without extinction and yet it manifests its extinction (appears to perish).

The reason for appearing to perish from this world (manifesting extinction in spite of being without extinction) was because there are benefits in announcing impending mortality.

Now, in the illustration, the part on the manifestation of extinction is not illustrated, but the reason for manifesting extinction is explained. The main reason for it is because there are sentient beings of weak virtue who see the Buddha (enlightenment) but do not cultivate the practice (take the medicine). This is being **unwilling to take it (fukō buku, 不肯服)**.

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- b. From **I must now establish a means (gakon tōsetsu hōben 我今當設方便 ...)**, there is responding by announcing the approach of death (impending mortality).<sup>71</sup> This illustrates that described before as 'being without extinction but announcing that one will perish'. In this, weakening and old age are explained in two parts:
1. Finding the opportunity to leave
  2. Responding with the announcement of death
1. Finding an opportunity to leave illustrates that described before as the problem that is associated with remaining in this world too long and the benefits realized by declaring that the spiritual life will die (announcing its impending mortality).

我 今 當 設 方 便, 令 服 此 藥。】  
ga kon tō setsu hō ben, ryō buku shi yaku.  
I now must establish ways means, make take this medicine.

“I must now establish a means to make them take this medicine.”

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From **He then made these words (soku sa zagon, 即作是言 ...)**:

2. The response of announcing the approach of mortality.<sup>71</sup> This illustrates manifestation of extinction as a means to provide spiritual transformation to sentient beings.

即 作 是 言: 【汝 等 當 知! 我 今 衰 老, 死 時 已 至,  
soku sa ze gon: nyo tō tō chi! ga kon sui rō, shi ji i shi,  
Then make these words: You who must know! I now weak old, death time already near,

是 好 良 藥, 今 留 在 此, 汝 可 取 服, 勿 憂 不 差。】  
ze kō rō yaku, kon ru zai shi, nyo ka shu buku, mots- u fu sai.  
this fine good medicine, now leave here this, you may keep take, mustn't fear not cured.

作 是 教 已, 復 至 他 國, 遣 使 還 告:  
sa ze kyō i, bu shi ta koku, ken shi gen gō:  
Make this teaching already, again go another nation, send messenger return announce:

【汝 父 已 死。】  
nyo bu i shi.  
your father already dead.

“He then made these words:

‘You should know that I am now old and weak and the time of my death is approaching. I will now leave this good and pleasing medicine here in this world. You may keep it and take it, and you need not fear that you will not be cured.’”

“Having made these instructions, he again went away to another nation.

He then dispatched a messenger who came back to announce:

‘Your father is already dead.’”

- a. **The time of my death is approaching** (shiji ishi, 死時已至): This is announcing impending entry into spiritual freedom (nirvāṇa, going beyond this afflicted world).
- b. **I will now leave this good and pleasing medicine here in this world** (zekō rōyaku konru zaishi, 是好良藥今留在此). This is leaving a monument (stūpa), a legacy containing the grace of the Buddha’s spiritual life in this world. This is a reference to the Buddha’s words, the doctrines of the sūtras.
- c. **He again went to another nation** (bushi takoku, 復至他國): This is on the perishing of the manifested in this world while its birth is being manifested somewhere else. Earlier sūtras spoke about sentient beings praying to a Buddha that was in another nation and the Buddha there seeing them and protecting them from afar. This is the meaning of this.
- d. **Dispatched a messenger** (kenshi, 遣使) to announce the manifestation has already perished:
  - \* Some held this was a great voice universally addressing all sentient beings from nirvāṇa.
  - \* Some held that it referred to the grace descending from the Buddha’s spiritual life.
  - \* Some held that it referred to the relics (śarīra, 舍利)<sup>14</sup> the Buddha left in this world after he passed from it which are worshipped by the faithful.
  - \* Some held that it referred to the teachings of the scriptures.
  - \* Some held other things to be this messenger.

Now, this sūtra says that the four bodhisattvas who may be relied upon (四依菩薩)<sup>7</sup> are the ones who deliver the message to sentient beings. These bodhisattvas have declared that: “After the Buddha passes from this world, all that will remain will be this mission that we now proclaim to you. You must accept its practice.”

If later there are societies that are without these four bodhisattvas who may be relied upon to transmit this sūtra’s teaching, how will they be able to recognize it for themselves? And so this sūtra maintains that, after the Buddha’s extinction, these four will be its messengers.

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2. From **When the children heard that they had lost their father** (zeji shoshi monbu, 是時諸子聞父...), there is a part on all the children being spiritually awakened, illustrating that before about the benefits of extinction (mortality). Before, this was in two parts:
  - a. Explaining that there are disadvantages to being without extinction and that there are benefits in manifesting it
  - b. Explaining these disadvantages and benefits.Now, in the illustration, the sūtra only illustrates the benefits that are realized.

- a. The benefits of manifesting extinction in the present

是 時 諸 子 聞 父 背 喪, 心 大 憂 惱  
ze ji sho shi mon bu hai sō, shin dai u nō  
This time all children hear father gone lost, minds great grief distress

而 作 是 念：【若 父 在 者，慈 愍 我 等，  
ni sa ze nen: nyaku bu zai sha, ji min ga tō,  
then make this thought: If father here he, mercy pity us who,

能 見 救 護，今 者 捨 我 遠 喪 他 國。】  
nō ken kyu go, kon sha sha ga on sō ta koku.  
able see rescue protect, now he abandon us faraway lost another nation.

“When the children heard that they have lost their father, their minds were filled with grief and distress. They then made this thought:

‘If our father were here, he would have mercy and compassion for us. He would be able to see us, save us and protect us. He has now abandoned us, and we have lost him to another nation far away.’”

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b. The benefits for sentient beings after the passing (extinction) of the Buddha:

Beginning with **Considering themselves to be orphans (jiyui koro, 自惟孤露 ...)**, there is an explanation of the benefits attained after the passing (extinction) of the Buddha, like there were during the tenure of Upagupta.<sup>79</sup> This is also in two parts:

- a. The benefits of manifesting extinction
- b. The spiritual receptivity of sentient beings for this spiritual life in the future

自 惟 孤 露，無 復 恃 怙，常 懷 悲 感，  
ji yui ko ro, mu bu ji ko, jō e hi kan,  
self consider alone exposed, not anymore rely depend, always harbor grief feelings,

心 遂 醒 悟，乃 知 此 藥 色 味 香 美，  
shin zui shō go, nai chi shi yaku shiki kō mi mi,  
mind attain wake awaken, then recognize this medicine color fragrance fine taste,

即 取 服 之，毒 病 皆 愈。  
soku shu buku shi, doku byō kai yu.  
then hold take of this, poison sickness all cured.

“Considering themselves to be orphans, no longer having anyone to depend upon and harboring constant feelings of grief, their minds awakened. Recognizing this medicine with its beautiful color, fine fragrance and pleasing taste, they held onto it and took it, and they were completely cured of this toxic disease.”

Because there will be sentient beings who will awaken to life’s greater purpose and take the medicine after the Buddha’s extinction, there will be the causes and conditions for them to cultivate their practice in the future. This is being able to have receptivity for the response of a manifestation of this spiritual life that will transform them.

\* The Sūtra on The Buddha’s Last Bequest (遺教經 or 佛垂般涅槃略說教誡經) says:

“Those who have not yet been delivered will be made to attain the causes and conditions of deliverance.”

This is also called ‘acquiring the receptivity to see and recognize the medicine’.

- \* The Sūtra About Meditation On the Practice of the Bodhisattva ‘Wholly Worthy’ (Samanta Bhadra Caryā Dhyāna Sūtra, 觀普賢菩薩行法經) says:  
“Having struggled diligently, they all will get to see different emanations (divisions and multiplications) in the spiritual life (S. kāya vibhakti, 分身)<sup>16</sup> of the Buddha Śākyamuni, the whole, intact spiritual life (S. ātma bhāva stīṣṭhati eka ghaṇaḥ, 全身) of The One Who Has Descended Into This World ‘Of Abundant Treasures’ (Prabhūta Ratna, 多寶),<sup>8</sup> the Buddha ‘Of Most Virtuous Character’ (Suguna, 善德)<sup>8</sup> in the east, all of the other Buddhas of the ten directions (in space),<sup>8</sup> the seven Blessed Beings of the past<sup>8</sup> (in time) as well as all of the other enlightened beings (who are cited in The Lotus Sūtra).”

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- c. From **The father heard that his children had already been completely cured (gobu monshi shitsu-i tokusai**, 其父聞子悉已得差 ...), there is a part about *the benefits from the awesome spiritual power (of grace) that is forever remaining to bring forth benefits in the future.*

其	父	聞	子	悉	已	得	差,
go	bu	mon	shi	shitsu	i	toku	sai,
Their	father	hears	children	completely	already	attain	cure,

尋	便	來	歸,	咸	使	見	之。
jin	ben	rai	ki,	gen	shi	ken	shi.
search	means	come	return,	all	messengers	see	to it.

**“Their father, hearing that his children had been completely cured, searched for a means to come back to them. His messengers saw to this.”**

When the father heard that his children were cured, it was because they now had the spiritual receptivity needed to see his messengers everywhere. This is about the Buddha arising to respond by spiritually transforming sentient beings in the future with the benefits of both visible forms and voiced sounds,<sup>43</sup> as described in the words of the sūtra.

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- 2. From **“Good sons, what do you think? (shozen nanshi! o i unga?, 諸善男子!於意云何? ...)** there is a part on how the doctor’s different means of teaching are all valid, illustrating that before about the benefits of the past, present & future all being without any falsehood.

「	諸	善	男	子!	於	意	云	何?	頗	有	人	能	說
	sho	zen	nan	shi!	o	i	un	ga?	ha	u	nin	nō	sets-
	All	good	(sons)!	in	mind	say	what?	Could	have	person	able	say	

此	良	醫	虛	妄	罪	不?	」	「	不	也,	世	尊!	」
shi	rō	i	ko	mō	zai	fu?		fu-	cha,	se	son!		
this	good	doctor	false	lie	sin	(or not)?		Not	be,	World	Honored!		

“Good sons, what do you think? Can anyone really say that the good doctor had been dishonest about this?”  
 “No, Blessed One!”

\*\*\*\*\*

- b. Beginning with **The Buddha then said: ‘And like this I ... (butsugon ga yaku nyoze,**  
 佛言: 我亦如是 ...), there is the conclusion of the illustration.

佛 言: 「我 亦 如 是, 成 佛 已 來、  
 butsu gon: ga yaku nyo ze, jō butsu i rai,  
 Buddha said: I also like this, become Buddha already come,

無 量 無 邊 百 千 萬 億 那 由 他 阿 僧 祇 劫,  
 mu ryō mu hen hyaku zen man oku na yu ta a sō gi kō,  
 without limit without bounds 100 1000 10000 100000 (nayuta) (asamkhyeya) kalpas,

為 眾 生 故, 以 方 便 力、 言 當 滅 度,  
 i shu jō ko, i hō ben riki, gon tō metsu do,  
 for many living so, by ways means power, say must perish pass,

亦 無 有 能, 如 法 說 我 虛 妄 過 者。」  
 yaku mu u nō nyo hō setsu ga ko mō ka sha.  
 also not have ability accord purpose teach I falsehood lie error (one).

The Buddha then said:

“And like this I have already attained enlightenment and descended into this world for hundreds, thousands, millions, a countless number of ages. For sentient beings I have spoken of the need to perish from this world, using the power of ways and means. And there is no one who can honestly say that I have committed an error or falsehood.”

1. I have already attained enlightenment and descended into this world for countless ... ages (jōbutsu irai muryō ... kō, 成佛已來無量 ... 劫):  
This is the conclusion about the benefits of the past.
2. I have spoken of the need to perish from this world, using the power of ways & means (i hōben riki gontō metsudo, 方便力言當滅度):  
This is the conclusion about the benefits of the present.  
 The brief words of this conclusion do not mention the benefits of the future.
3. And no one can honestly say that I have committed an error or falsehood (yaku mu u nō nyohō setsu ga komō kasha, 亦無能如法說我虛妄過者):  
This is the conclusion about the benefits being without any falsehood.

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# **The commentary on this sixteenth chapter from Zhìyǐ's 'Words & Passages of The Lotus Sūtra'**

*C. Fahuá Wénjù, J. Hokke Mongu, 法華文句*

## **Part #3 - A explanation of this chapter's text**

### *Section C - The verse reiterating the prose*

### Part #3 - An explanation of the chapter's text

#### Section C - The verse reiterating the prose

爾 時 世 尊 欲 重 宣 此 義, 而 說 偈 言:  
 ni ji se son yoku jū sen shi gi, ni setsu ge gon:  
 At this time World Honored desired repeat declare this meaning, then taught verse saying:

Then the Blessed One, desiring to reiterate the meaning of this, spoke in verse, saying:

\*\*\*\*\*

- B. **The verse**, in twenty-five and a half stanzas, reiterates the prose section.
1. The first twenty and a half stanzas are a reiteration of the main teaching in the prose
  2. The last five stanzas reiterate the illustration of the good doctor.
1. **The reiteration of the main teaching** is in two parts, as was the main teaching itself:
- a. The first nineteen and a half stanzas are a reiteration of the benefits over time, here over the past, present and future (in the prose, it was just from the past to the present).
  - b. Then there is a single stanza reiterating that all of it is true and without any falsehood.
- a. Of the nineteen and a half stanzas about *the benefits of the past, present and future*:
1. The first four stanzas reiterate the benefits of the past and is in three parts:
    - a. First, there is one stanza beginning with **Since I have attained enlightenment and descended into this world ... (jiga toku burrai, 自我得佛來 ...)** that reiterates the prose before on *having attained enlightenment long ago*.
    - b. Next, from **Ever teaching about life's purpose and spiritually transforming ... (jō seppō kyōke, 常說法教化 ...)**, there is one stanza reiterating that described before as *the benefits there have been in the meantime*.<sup>37</sup>
    - c. Then, from **In order to deliver sentient beings ... (i do shujō ko, 為度眾生故 ...)**, there are two stanzas reiterating that previously described as *the place where these benefits have been found*.
- a. *On having attained enlightenment long ago*:

「自	我	得	佛	來,	所	經	諸	劫	數,	
ji	ga	toku	bur-	rai,	sho	kyō	sho	kō-	shu,	
Since	I	became	Buddha	come,	here	elapsed	many	kalpas	number,	
無	量	百	千	萬,	億	載	阿	僧	祇,	//1
mu	ryō	hyaku	zen	man	oku	sai	a	sō	gi,	
without	limit	100	1000	10000	100000	multiples	(asamkhyeya),			

“Since I have attained enlightenment and descended into this world  
 Many ages have passed,  
 Limitless hundreds thousands and millions,  
 A myriad, a countless number. //1

2. *On the benefits there have been in the meantime:*

常	說	法	教	化,	無	數	億	眾	生,	
jō	sep-	pō	kyō	ke,	mu	shu	oku	shu	jō,	
ever	teach	purpose	instruct	transform,	without	count	100000	many	living	
令	入	於	佛	道。	爾	來	無	量	劫,	//2
ryō	nyū	o	butsu	dō.	ni	rai	mu	ryō	kō,	
make	enter	into	Buddha	path.	since	come	without	count	kalpas,	

“Ever teaching about life’s purpose and spiritually transforming  
 Countless billions of sentient beings,  
 I have made them enter into the path of enlightenment.  
 Since this, there have been ages without measure.   //2

3. *On the place where these benefits have been found:*

為	度	眾	生	故,	方	便	現	涅	槃,	
i	do	shu	jō	ko,	hō	ben	gen	ne	han,	
to	deliver	many	living	so,	ways	means	present	(nirvāṇa),		
而	實	不	滅	度,	常	住	此	說	法。	//3
ni	jitsu	fu	metsu	do	jō	jū	shi	sep-	pō.	
but	really	without	perish	pass	ever	abiding	here	teaching	purpose.	
我	常	住	於	此,	以	諸	神	通	力,	
ga	jō	jū	o	shi,	i	sho	jin	zū	riki,	
I	always	abide	in	this,	by	many	spiritual	pervading	powers	
令	顛	倒	眾	生,	雖	近	而	不	見。	//4
ryō	ten	dō	shu	jō,	sui	gon	ni	fu	ken.	
make	upset	confused	many	living,	though	near	however	not	see.	

“In order to deliver sentient beings  
 There have been the ways & means of teaching about nirvāṇa,  
 Yet I have never really perished from this world.  
 Always remaining here to teach of life’s true purpose,   //3

I have forever abided in this world.  
 Through the pervading power of grace  
 I have made it so that sentient beings who were upset and confused  
 Did not see me, even though I was near.”   //4

\*\*\*\*\*

2. Next, from **Many see me pass from this world (shuken ga metsudo, 眾見我滅度 ...)**, there are five stanzas reiterating the benefits of the present. As before, the words are in two parts:

a. *First, there are two and a half stanzas that reiterate being without birth yet manifesting birth.*

眾	見	我	滅	度,	廣	供	養	舍	利,	
shu	ken	ga	metsu	do,	kō	ku	yō	sha	ri,	
Many	see	me	perish	pass,	broadly	offer	service	to	(śarīra),	
咸	皆	懷	戀	慕,	而	生	渴	仰	心。	//5
gen	kai	e	ren	bo,	ni	shō	katsu	gō	shin.	
All	everywhere	hearts	yearn	long,	then	arise	thirsting	reverent	mind.	
眾	生	既	信	伏,	質	直	意	柔	軟,	
shu	jō	ki	shin	buku,	shichi	jiki	i	nyū	nan,	
Many	living	already	faithful	subdued,	straight	honest	thoughts	soft	gentle,	
一	心	欲	見	佛,	不	自	惜	身	命。	//6
is-	shin	yok-	ken	butsu,	fu	ji	shaku	shin	myō.	
single	mind	aspire	see	Buddha,	not	self	stingy	life	livelihood.	
時	我	及	眾	僧,	俱	出	靈	鷲	山,	
ji	ga	gyū	shu	sō,	ku	shutsu	ryō	ju	san,	
time	I	with	host of	sangha,	together	appear	Holy	Vulture	Peak,	

“Many see me pass from this world,  
Spreading offerings to my relics.  
Everywhere having feelings of yearning and longing,  
They bear a thirsting and reverent mind. // 5

These sentient beings are faithful and disciplined,  
Their minds are straight and honest, obedient and gentle.  
With singleness of mind they aspire to see the Buddha (the enlightened being)  
Without being stingy with their lives or their livelihood. //6

At this time the whole community of believers is with me  
Appearing together on Vulture’s Peak.

b. Then, from **I then speak to these sentient beings (gaji go shujō, 我時語眾生 ...)**, there are *two and half stanzas that reiterate being without extinction yet manifesting extinction*.

我	時	語	眾	生:	【常	在	此	不	滅,	//7
ga	ji	go	shu	jō:	jō	zai	shi	fu	metsu,	
I	then	address	many	living:	always	here	this	not	perish,	
以	方	便	力	故,	現	有	滅	不	滅。】	
i	hō	ben	rik-	ko,	gen	u	metsu	u	metsu.	
by	ways	means	power	so,	manifest	have	extinction	no	extinction.	

餘	國	有	眾	生,	恭	敬	信	樂	者,	//8
yo	koku	u	shu	jō,	ku	gyō	shin	gyō	sha,	
Other nations have many living,					(reverent) faithful content those,					

我	復	於	彼	中,	為	說	無	上	法。
ga	bu	o	hi	chū,	i	setsu	mu	jō	hō.
I	return	to	their	midst,	to	teach	no	higher	purpose.

汝	等	不	聞	此,	但	謂	我	滅	度。	//9
nyo	tō	fu	mon	shi,	tan	i	ga	metsu	do.	
You	who	not	hear	this,	only	reason	I	perished	passed.	

I then speak to these sentient beings, saying:  
 "I am forever abiding in this world, without perishing, //7

But through the power of skillful ways & means  
 I appear to pass from this world, yet never really do so."  
 Other nations have sentient beings  
 Who are reverent, faithful and content. //8

I return among them  
 To teach about life's supreme purpose.  
 You who do not hear this  
 Only understand that I have passed away." //9

\*\*\*\*\*

3. From **I see many sentient beings (ga ken sho shujō, 我見諸眾生 ...)**, there are ten and a half stanzas on what the prose explained as the benefits of the future. Before, in the prose, the meaning of this was reduced to four words about the Buddha's spiritual life - **forever abiding without perishing (jōjū fumetsu, 常住不滅 ...)**. Now it is elaborated.
- a. First, from **I see many sentient beings (ga ken sho shujō, 我見諸眾生 ...)**, there are one and a half stanzas on receptivity, sympathy and response in the future:

我	見	諸	眾	生,	沒	在	於	苦	惱,	
ga	ken	sho	shu	jō,	motsu	zai	o	ku	kai,	
I	see	many	multitude	living,	sinking	here	in	suffering	ocean,	

  

故	不	為	現	身,	令	其	生	渴	仰,	// 10
ko	fu	i	gen	shin,	ryō	go	shō	katsu	gō,	
so	not	for	manifest	life,	make	them	bear	thirst	reverence,	

  

因	其	心	戀	慕,	乃	出	為	說	法。	
in	go	shin	ren	bo,	nai	shutsu	i	sep-	pō.	
cause	their	minds	yearn	long	then	appear	to	teach	purpose	

"I will see many sentient beings  
Sinking into the ocean of suffering,  
But I will not reveal my life to them.  
Making them bear thirst and reverence, //10

Causing their minds to yearn and long,  
I will appear to teach of life's purpose."

\*\*\*\*\*

- b. From the pervading power of grace will be like this (jinzūriki nyoze, 神通力如是 ...),<sup>11</sup>  
there are *four stanzas reiterating that in the prose on forever abiding without perishing*  
(jōjū fumetsu, 常住不滅):

神	通	力	如	是,	於	阿	僧	祇	劫,	//11
jin	zū	riki	nyo	ze,	o	a	sō	gi	kō,	
spiritual	grace	power	like	this,	for	(asamkhyeya)	kalpas			

常	在	靈	鷲	山,	及	餘	諸	住	處。
jō	zai	ryō	ju	san	gyū	yo	sho	jū	sho.
always	here	Holy	Vulture	Peak	and	other	many	dwelling	places.

眾	生	見	劫	盡,	大	火	所	燒	時,	//12
shu	jō	ken	kō	jin	dai	ka	sho	shō	ji	
many	living	see	ages	end	great	fire	here	burning	time	

我	此	土	安	隱,	天	人	常	充	滿。
ga	shi	do	an-	on	ten	nin	jō	jū	man.
I	this	land	peaceful	secure	gods	people	always	(fulfilled).	

園	林	諸	堂	閣,	種	種	寶	莊	嚴,	//13
on	rin	sho	dō	kaku	shu	ju	hō	shō	gon	
gardens	forests	many	temples	towers	kinds	kinds	treasure	(adorn)		

寶	樹	多	花	菓,	眾	生	所	遊	樂。
hō	ju	ta	ke	ka	shu	jō	sho	yū	raku
precious	trees	many	blossoms	fruits	many	living	here	enjoy	bliss

諸	天	擊	天	鼓,	常	作	眾	伎	樂,	//14
sho	ten	gyaku	ten	ku	jō	sa	shu	gi	gaku	
many	gods	beat	divine	drums	ever	making	much	artful	music	

雨	曼	陀	羅	花,	散	佛	及	大	眾。
u	man	da	ra	ke	san	butsu	gyū	dai	shu
rain	(mandārava)	blossoms			scatter	Buddha	with	great	multitude



"The pervading power of grace will be like this  
For countless ages //11

Always here on Vulture's Peak  
As well as many other places.  
Sentient beings will see the ends of ages,  
Times when great fires rage. //12

My land will be a sanctuary of peace  
Where those of heaven and humanity are always fulfilled.  
The gardens and forests will have temples and monuments  
Adorned with various kinds of treasures. //13

There will be precious trees with blossoms and fruits, and  
Sentient beings will always be content.  
Those in heaven will beat divine drums  
Ever making beautiful music. //14

Mandārava blossoms will rain down  
Scattering on the Buddha and all the assembly."

- \* **Always here on Vulture's Peak (jōzai ryōjusan, 常在靈鷲山):**<sup>19</sup>  
This is the land from where there is the descending of the reward of grace.<sup>9</sup>
- \* **As well as many other places (gyūyo sho jūsho, 及餘諸住處):**  
This is a reference to the land of skillful ways & means.<sup>9</sup> This was previously described as 'another nation' (ta koku, 他國), where the good doctor travels after leaving this world.
- \* **Where those of heaven & humanity will always be fulfilled (tennin jōjūman, 天人常充滿):**
  - \* **Humanity (nin, 人)** here refers to the first thirty stages of the bodhisattva path.<sup>33</sup>
  - \* **Heaven (ten, 天)** here refers to its ten levels of grounding.<sup>33</sup>
- \* **Those in heaven will beat divine drums (shoten gyaku tenku, 諸天擊天鼓):**  
This refers to those who teach without needing to be asked.
- \* **Mandārava blossoms will rain down (u mandara ke, 雨曼陀羅花):**  
This refers to the ranks of the worthy and the noble.<sup>80</sup>

\*\*\*\*\*

- c. Next, from **My pure land will not be defiled (ga jōdo fuki, 我淨土不毀 ...)**, there are two stanzas that illustrate those without a vision of the causes and conditions for enlightenment.

我 淨 土 不 毀, ga jō do fu ki, my pure land not defiled,	而 眾 見 燒 盡, ni shu ken shō jin, but many see burning destroy,
//15	
憂 怖 諸 苦 惱, u fu sho ku nō, grief fear much suffer distress,	如 是 悉 充 滿。 nyo ze shitsu jū man. like this completely (fulfilled).

是 諸 罪 眾 生,                      以 惡 業 因 緣,                      //16  
ze sho zai shu jō,                      i aku gō in en,  
these all sinful many living                      by evil sctions causes conditions

過 阿 僧 祇 劫,                      不 聞 三 寶 名。  
ka a sō gi kō,                      fu mon san bō myō.  
exceed (asamkhyeya) kalpas                      not hear three treasures names

“My pure land will not be defiled  
Yet many will see burning and destruction,                      //15

Grieving, fearful and suffering distress.  
Like this, they will be completely fulfilled.  
Sentient beings who are immoral  
Through conditioning from evil actions                      //16

For countless ages  
Will not hear about the Three Treasures.”

\*\*\*\*\*

- d. Next, from **Many have cultivated merits and virtues (sho u shu kudoku, 諸有修功德 ...)**, there are three stanzas illustrating *those who are able to see the causes and conditions for enlightenment*:

諸 有 修 功 德,                      柔 和 質 直 者,                      //17  
sho u shu ku doku,                      nyū wa shichi jiki sha,  
many have cultivated merits virtues,                      gently obey honest straight ones,

則 皆 見 我 身,                      在 此 而 說 法。  
sok- kai ken ga shin,                      zai shi ni sep- pō,  
so everywhere see my life,                      herein this then teach purpose.

或 時 為 此 眾,                      說 佛 壽 無 量,                      //18  
waku ji i shi shu,                      setsu butsu ju mu ryō,  
Some times for this multitude,                      teach Buddha lifespan no measure,

久 乃 見 佛 者,                      為 說 佛 難 值。  
ku nai ken buts- sha                      i setsu butsu nan chi  
long then see (Buddha),                      for teach Buddha hard to meet.

我 智 力 如 是,                      慧 光 照 無 量,                      //19  
ga chi riki nyo ze                      e kō shō mu ryō  
My wisdom power like this,                      insight light shines without measure,

壽 命 無 數 劫,                      久 修 業 所 得。  
ju myō mu shu kō,                      ku shu gō sho toku.  
life livelihood (countless) ages,                      ever cultivate actions here attain.

“Many will cultivate merits and virtues  
They will be obedient and gentle, straight and honest. //17

It follows that they will see my life  
Here in this world, teaching of life’s purpose.  
Sometimes for sentient beings  
I will teach that the Buddha’s life is without measure. //18

Having seen the Buddha for too long  
I will teach that the Buddha is difficult to encounter.  
With the power of my transcendental knowledge being like this  
The light of its discernment will shine on without measure //19

Over a lifespan of countless ages  
Ever being acquired through the cultivation of actions (karma, 業).”

\*\*\*\*\*

- b. Next, from **You who have wisdom** (nyotō u chisha, 汝等有智者 ...), there is one stanza reiterating that previously described in the prose as the benefits that are without falsehood.

汝	等	有	智	者,	勿	於	此	生	疑,	//20
nyo	tō	u	chi	sha	motsu	o	shi	shō	gi	
You	who	have	wisdom	ones,	mustn't	in	this	bear	doubt,	

  

當	斷	令	永	盡,	佛	語	實	不	虛。	
tō	dan	ryō	yō	jin,	butsu	go	jitsu	fu	ko.	
must	resolve	make	forever	end,	Buddha's	words	true	not	false.	

“You who have wisdom  
Must not bear uncertainty about this. //20

You must resolve your doubts and banish them forever  
The Buddha’s words are all true and without any falsehood.”

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2. Next, from **Like the doctor’s skillful ways & means ...** (nyo i zen hōben, 如醫善方便 ...), there are five stanzas **reiterating the illustration**. This is in two parts.
- a. First there is one stanza reiterating the opening up of the illustration, in three parts:
1. First, the single line saying **Like the doctor’s skillful ways & means** (nyo i zen hōben, 如醫善方便) reiterates the benefits of the past.
  2. Then, from **To heal his sick children** (ishi ōshi ko, 為治狂子故 ...), there are two lines that reiterate the benefits of the present. There is no reiteration here about the benefits of the future.
  3. In saying **one can not say that he has spoken falsely** (munō set- komō, 無能說虛妄), there is a single line reiterating that which is without any falsehood.

如 醫 善 方 便, 為 治 狂 子 故, //21  
nyo i zen hō ben, i shi ō shi ko,  
like doctor's skillful ways means, to heal deranged children so,

實 在 而 言 死, 無 能 說 虛 妄。  
jitsu zai ni gon shi, mu nō set-ko mō.  
really here but say dead, not able teach falsehood lie.

“Like the doctor's skillful ways & means  
For healing his sick children. //21

Although really here in this world, he speaks of dying.  
One cannot say that he has spoken falsely.”

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- b. Finally, from **I am also the father of this world ... (ga yaku i sebu, 我亦為世父 ...)**, there are four stanzas reiterating the conclusion of the illustration. Before, in the conclusion of the teaching in the prose, the future benefits were not included.

1. Here there is first one line reiterating the conclusion about the benefits in the past.

我 亦 為 世 父, 救 諸 苦 患 者, //22  
ga yaku i se bu, kyu sho ku gen sha  
I also as world father, rescue all suffering sick beings

“I am also the father of this world  
Saving all those who are suffering from sickness.” //22

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2. Next, beginning with **For ordinary people who are upset and confused ... (i bonbu tendō, 為凡夫顛倒 ...)**, there are two and a half stanzas reiterating the conclusion about the benefits in the present:

為 凡 夫 顛 倒, 實 在 而 言 滅。  
i bon bu ten dō, jitsu zai ni gon metsu.  
for common people upset confused, really here but say perished.

以 常 見 我 故, 而 生 憍 恣 心, //23  
i jō ken ga ko, ni shō kyō shi shin,  
by always see me so, then bear arrogant smug mind,

放 逸 著 五 欲, 墮 於 惡 道 中。  
hō itsu jaku go yoku, da o aku dō chū.  
lax idle attached five desires, fall into evil path midst.

我	常	知	眾	生,	行	道	不	行	道,	//24
ga	jō	chi	shu	jō,	gyō	dō	fu	gyō	dō,	
I	always	know	many	living	walk	path	not	walk	path,	
隨	應	所	可	度,	為	說	種	種	法。	
zui	ō	sho	ka	do,	i	sets-	shu	ju	hō.	
adapt	respond	here	may	deliver	to	teach	kinds	kinds	purposes.	

“For ordinary people who are upset and confused  
 I speak of perishing, yet I am really here.  
 Because they always see me,  
 They produce thoughts that are arrogant and complacent. //23

Idle and attached to the five sensory desires  
 They fall into the path of evil.  
 I always understand sentient beings, and  
 Whether or not they are on the path to enlightenment //24

Adapting accordingly, I respond to deliver them  
 Teaching of life’s various purposes.

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3. Finally, from **Always making this thought to myself ... (mai ji sa zenen, 每自作是念 ...)**,  
 there is one stanza reiterating the conclusion on that which is without any falsehood.

每	自	作	是	念,	以	何	令	眾	生,	//25
mai	ji	sa	ze	nen,	i	ga	ryō	shu	jō,	
always	myself	making	this	thought,	by	what	make	many	living,	
得	入	無	上	道,	速	成	就	佛	身。」	//25½
toku	nyū	mu	jō	dō,	soku	jō	ju	bus-	shin?	
attain	entry	no	higher	path,	quickly	attain	realize	Buddha’s	life?	

Always making this thought to myself:  
 How will I make sentient beings //25  
 Attain entry into the supreme path, and  
 Quickly realize the life of enlightenment?” //25½

Opening up the three (provisional vehicles) and revealing the one (transcendental vehicle),  
 Opening up the immediate manifestation (that is here & now) and revealing the distant source  
 (that is timeless & eternal) and  
 Desiring to make sentient beings quickly enter into the path of enlightenment ...  
 This work certainly cannot be false.